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NO. 3

Must School Safety Come to This?

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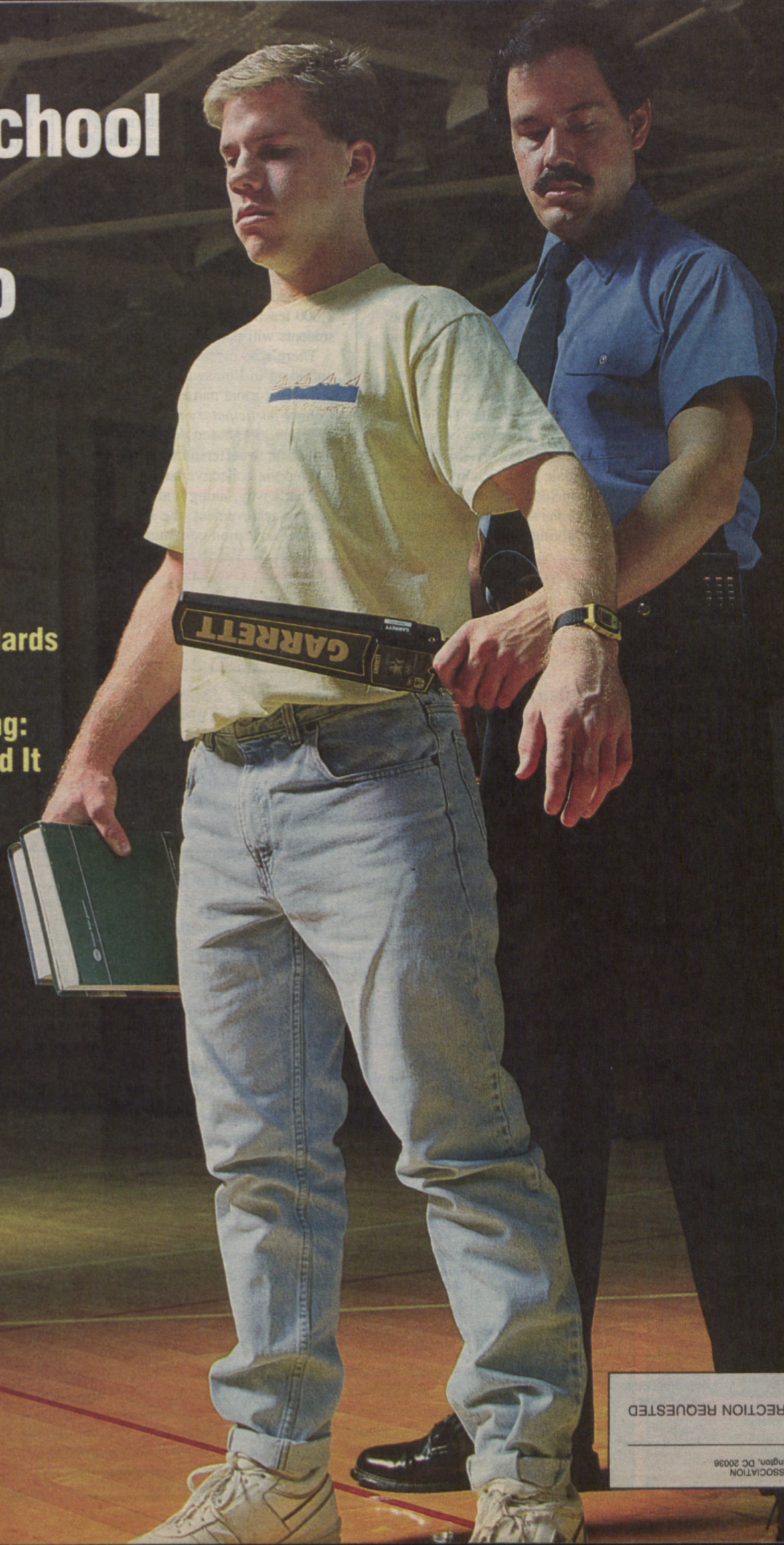

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PRESIDENT'S VIEWPOINT

Bargaining a Miracle in Louisville

As summer drew to a close, I celebrated the back-to-school season by visiting Kentucky's Jefferson County Teachers Association (JCTA). I returned from Louisville feeling exhilarated—*and* vindicated.

Throughout this era of reform, I've said again and again that collective bargaining is not merely the surest route to professional dignity and compensation—it is also the key to bold, systemic school restructuring.

By now, I'm ready for the reaction to this claim. I'm prepared for the cynics who say that collective bargaining can never be more than a strategy to address bread-and-butter issues. But until recently, I wasn't prepared for the question: Where's your proof?

I am now—I have the proof. I found it in Louisville.

In Jefferson County today, there's a miracle in progress—a miracle in the form of bold programs that are propelling student achievement beyond what anyone would have dared to predict just one year ago.

At Maupin Elementary School, students learn early that *they* must assume responsibility for their own education. The youngsters at Maupin have a real voice in school decision-making.

At Lassiter Middle School (which has recently joined NEA's Mastery in Learning Project), a team of teachers is experimenting with a "fail-safe" system. No student assigned to the team ever knows failure. But every student learns the value of perseverance. Students who perform poorly receive no grade. They continue their studies, with the help of student teachers from the University of Louisville. Their school year ends only when they've earned a passing grade in every subject.

At Fairdale High School, the daily schedule includes a Teacher Guided Assistance Period—time devoted solely to giving students one-on-one help with both personal and academic problems. Students themselves choose the teacher with whom they work.

Joe Di Dio

NEA President **Keith Geiger**

These are but a few of the results of Louisville's school restructuring project—a project that our Jefferson County colleagues bargained into being. Success has been so great that this risk-taking venture, initiated at 24 Louisville-area schools last year, has been expanded to an additional 24 schools. Some 2,000 teachers and more than 30,000 students will take part this year.

There's no mystery to the miracle unfolding in Louisville—once you know its formal name: the Jefferson County *participatory management program.* Site-based decision making has come to Jefferson County. And it arrived via collective bargaining.

That's why, along with improved student achievement, the Jefferson County education community is seeing newfound harmony among teachers, administrators, and district officials. JCTA's new master contract specifies that decisions previously made in central district offices shall now be made in local schools—by teachers and principals working in concert.

During my Louisville visit, JCTA president June Lee nicely summed up what I'd been seeing firsthand. "Our teachers feel renewed," June told me. "They're free to exercise their creativity. And that means improved instruction for every student."

The Louisville story shows that collective bargaining may just be the most effective method ever designed for turning conflicting ideas into workable programs that enhance student achievement. The JCTA contract offers proof that collective bargaining can make new allies of old adversaries. And it proves one more time that the best launching pad for effective reform is the local school site.

I enjoyed my visit to Louisville. And I'm now looking forward to visiting local NEA affiliates from San Diego to Memphis—other sites where action at the bargaining table is giving wings to education reform.

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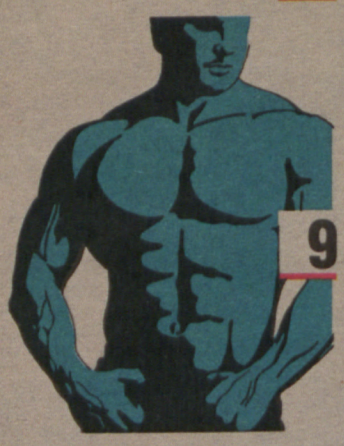

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April 22 is World Children's Day at the U.N., when the world's kids will run the show. Your students may not be in New York that day, but they can still be part of the celebration.

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In part two of our series on family finance, the Montgomerys of Holden, Mo., analyze their cash-flow position as they try to ensure financial security for themselves and their two children.

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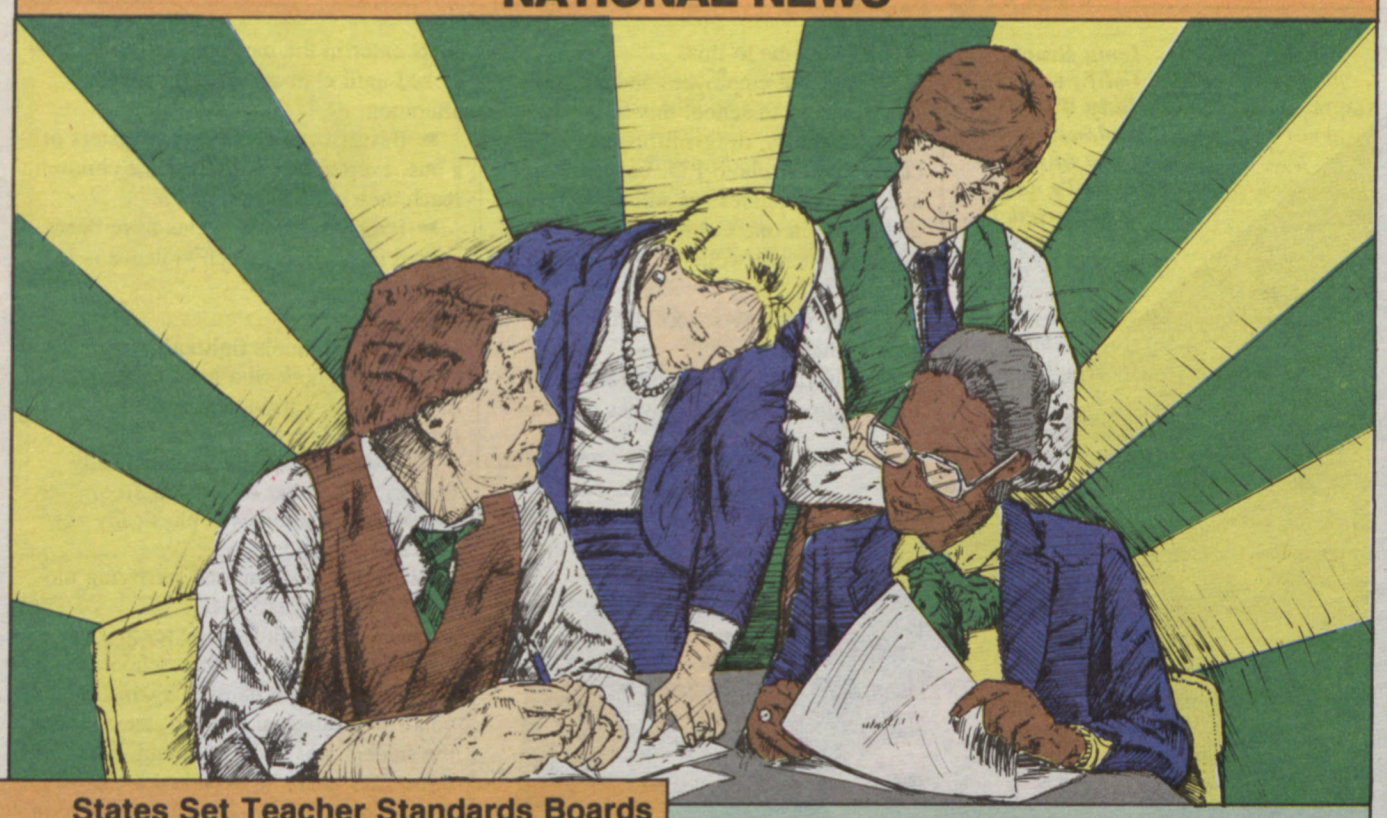
NATIONAL NEWS



States Set Teacher Standards Boards

Professionals Shape Their Profession

A handful of states are leading the way in giving educators more control over their profession and letting them decide what makes a teacher.

Educators setting standards for their profession. It's a concept long overdue—and the philosophy behind the developing National Board for Professional Teaching Standards. Now—thanks to successful lobbying by Association affiliates—it's becoming a popular concept at the state level, too.

For too long, state bureaucrats—the vast majority of them totally unfamiliar with today's classroom—have been making decisions about issues from entry standards to codes of conduct. Doctors and lawyers don't face such uninformed regulation, nor do practitioners in other professions. They apply their professional knowledge to setting their own licensing standards at the state level—and *teachers* are the experts who should be making equivalent decisions about teaching.

Until recently, only a handful of states had entrusted such responsibilities to teachers (Oregon's autonomous Teacher Standards and Practices Commission dates from 1969.) Now more states have set up standards boards, and a number of others are considering the idea. And the impetus behind the push for teacher-majority standards boards comes from NEA state and local affiliates.

Take Iowa, for example. This spring, the state legislature overwhelmingly approved the creation of an autonomous Board of Education Examiners to set standards and issue licenses for teachers, administrators, and related professionals in public and private education, from kindergarten through community college.

Iowa's Board consists of five teachers, four administrators, and two public representatives (including the director of the department of education). But just as important as a board's size and shape is its scope of authority. Iowa's Board holds final administrative authority over its own rules, staff, and budget, as well as over continuing education programs, licensure renewal requirements, and appeals. It has the power to define teacher rights and responsibilities. And it has the right to judge cases involving unprofessional conduct. The state board of education retains the authority to approve teacher preparation programs.

Iowa State Education Association President Ken Tilp is overjoyed with his state's new law. "It's one heck of a bill," he says. "In the eyes of the law, we now stand shoulder to shoulder with every other recognized profession in Iowa."

Although the 36,000-member ISEA had sought creation of an autonomous board since its founding 135 years ago, only in the last several years has it put its full political weight into achieving that goal. The special effort paid off. Teacher education policy makers and community leaders now work together on the board to fashion tough, credible, professional standards.

The 10,000-member Nevada State Education Association secured a standards board in 1987. Recognizing the need to build public confidence in the quality of Nevada's teachers, the legislature overwhelmingly passed an NSEA-backed bill establishing an autonomous Commission on Professional Standards.

Commission member and Association member Dave Lumos credits NSEA with helping Commission members tackle difficult issues like misassignment and reciprocity.

In several states with well-established standards boards, Associations have recently succeeded in fine-tuning the panels' composition. California's autonomous Commission on Teacher Credentialing has been operating since 1971. This year, at the urging of the California Teachers Association, the legislature increased teacher representation on the Commission.

Commission member and NEA Board of Directors member Wilma Wittman explains that teachers are willing not only to assert their rights but to assume responsibility for enforcing professional standards. California's Commission has autonomy in licensing teachers and the power to revoke credentials and to issue regulations.

The 44,500-member Minnesota Education Association also has succeeded in boosting teacher authority over state licensing standards. Teachers are now a majority on the Minnesota Board of Teaching, which grants licenses, sets standards, approves teacher preparation programs, and monitors professional conduct.

MEA president Bob Astrup considers the change a major victory for the profession. "For a long time we've wanted the authority to determine and control the requirements for licensure of those who enter the profession," he says. "Though the Board has been autonomous since 1976, there hasn't been a classroom majority until now."

Iowa State Education Association president Ken Tilp could be speaking for teachers in every state when he describes his state's new autonomous Board of Education Examiners: "It's a great chance to show Iowans and the nation just how professional our educators really are." —*Diane Dismuke*

News Beat

■ **Drug Abuse**—For the first time in 54 years of polling, adults say drug abuse is the nation's top problem. A recent Gallup Poll found that 92 percent of adults want tougher drug laws. Sixty percent of teenagers (ages 13-17, polled separately) see drug abuse as the biggest problem facing their age group. One of four teens reports being offered some illegal drug in the past 30 days.

■ **PTA Growth**—Over 6.6 million parents and teachers now belong to the National PTA. That's its highest membership total since 1975. Elected president last summer was Ann Lynch—a Las Vegas public relations executive and the organization's first working mother in the job.

■ **Delayed Entry**—This year 23 states require children to be 5 years old by Sept. 2 to enroll in kindergarten. A decade ago, most states allowed kindergarten entry for kids whose fifth birthdays fell as late as January. The reason for the change: school systems believe more mature children will be more successful.

■ **And Delayed Exit**—A recent federal study indicates an unprecedented decline in the percentage of Americans pursuring a college education. The proportion had been on the rise since the turn of the century. The study found that four years after graduation, 15 percent of the high school graduating class of '72 had college diplomas. By 1986, only 7 percent of the class of '82 had graduated from college. Two possible reasons: higher tuition and higher college dropout rates.

■ **What, Me Teach?**—Only 5.8 percent of high school sophomores surveyed recently said they were interested in teaching as a career. Four times that many would have to become teachers to meet the nation's growing need. Children of teachers apparently felt little attraction to their parents' calling: only 4 percent said they'd choose teaching. Many said their parents discouraged them.

WELL PUT

"We can fix faulty airplanes, recall poisonous food and even unnecessary weapons. But we can't recall children. They have only one chance to get an education."

—Joan Ganz Cooney
Originator of Sesame Street

COVER STORY

CAN WE MAKE SCHOOLS SAFE?

In too many schools, students and school employees fear for their personal safety. But some school systems have found at least partial solutions.

SCHOOL CRIME AND VIOLENCE

► About 5,200 of the nation's 1 million secondary school teachers are physically attacked at school every month.

► About 282,000 students are physically attacked in America's secondary schools each month.

► Almost 8 percent of urban junior and senior high school students missed at least one day of school a month last year because they were afraid to go to school.

Source: National Institute of Education

Bob Riha, Jr.

Long Beach, Calif., teacher Judy Wade (below) in front of her school's newly constructed 10-foot high, 900-foot long wall.

It has come to this.

School employees and students returned to school this fall to find metal detectors, drug-sniffing dogs, security guards, photo I.D. badges for staff, walkie-talkies for administrators, and even—in one California district—a 10-foot concrete wall surrounding school grounds.

Today, in many school districts around the nation:

► Outside school doors are regularly locked after school employees and students enter in the morning, not to be unlocked until classes let out in the afternoon.

► Bus drivers won't let youngsters off a bus, even if asked to, until the children reach their official destination.

► Evening athletic events have been shifted to daylight, when violence is less likely to occur.

Why are schools tightening up?

NEA members who have been victims of or witnesses to violent acts have no trouble detailing the reasons.

Last January, Texas teacher Shelly Brooks, a member of the Classroom Teachers of Dallas, was physically assaulted by a student.

"It was a shocking and terrifying moment," she recalls.

Brooks, an eighth-grade teacher at Benjamin Franklin Middle School, immediately brought charges against the youth who attacked her. But the next day the student was back in school, and, three days later, he assaulted a classmate. There was no formal investigation

"Schools lack visible security measures to deter both students and outsiders. Potential troublemakers can carry anything and everything onto campuses without getting stopped."

—Judy Wade
Middle school teacher
Long Beach, California

COVER STORY

Mel McIntire

"Large schools make students feel anonymous—and that gives them the idea that they can commit hostile acts without getting caught."

—Shelly Brooks
Middle school teacher
Dallas, Texas

of Brooks's case, and the charges against the student were eventually dropped.

Believing the worst had passed, Brooks continued teaching. Then, in March, three youths attacked her as she walked down the corridor. They hit her in the head, threw her against the wall, then knocked her down.

"I'm still numb from the attack—and I'm outraged that we teachers must be fearful for our safety," she says.

According to a recent report from the Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development, assaults, the carrying of weapons, drug transactions, and robberies have moved from the nation's streets to the nation's schoolyards, causing constant worries for parents, students, and school employees.

A year ago last May, 17-year-old LaTonya Martin was shot to death while walking home from a weekend dance at Atlanta's Brown High School. Teacher Carolyn Hart remembers LaTonya as a bright and popular student.

Hart, a member of the Atlanta Association of Educators, says violence made its way into the school gradually. Ten years ago, she recalls, she'd stay at school until early evening with no thought of security or fear of violence.

"Parents would often visit our classes without notes from the office and be welcome," says Hart. "If you asked a stranger to move out of the hall or check into the office, you didn't worry about being physically harmed. If you needed to reprimand a student all you heard in reply was, 'Yes, ma'am.' Unfortunately, we don't have the same safe feelings in our school buildings today.

"We now have a police officer on campus several times during the week," notes Hart. "It seems security's beginning to be taken seriously at last."

There are two prerequisites to effective school safety efforts, says Ronald Stephens, executive director of the U.S. Department of Justice's National School Safety Center.

"The first is to acknowledge there is, in fact, a serious problem of crime and violence on some school campuses," says Stephens, who believes that tragedies like last January's schoolyard slaughter in Stockton, California—where five students were shot to death—have made educators, law enforcers, and the public begin to face school safety issues.

"Second," Stephens adds, "we must keep focused on the big picture. There is no greater responsibility in society than ensuring the safety of our children and the quality of their education."

The extent to which schools face up to that responsibility varies—and so do the solutions schools choose.

In the California city of Long Beach, a 10-foot-high, bullet-proof, concrete barrier has been built next to a schoolyard, in an extraordinary attempt to protect employees and students from frequent street gunfire near the school.

Construction of a 900-foot-long concrete wall at Lindbergh Junior High School was the last resort for teachers, parents, and students worried about the gunfire near their playgrounds.

"It's really tragic that something like this has to be done," says Judy Wade, a physical education teacher and a member of the Teachers Association of Long Beach. "Regrettably, this is needed in today's society."

Bullets, fired from an adjacent housing project, had been flying around Lindbergh Junior High in increasing bursts over the last two years, wounding one ninth grader and narrowly missing students, teachers, and grounds workers on several occasions.

Few other schools have built a barrier as large as Long Beach's wall, but a number of districts have constructed smaller barriers that provide students and teachers safe passage to and from school.

In many other schools, all entrances except the main one, are always locked. Visitors are asked to wear ID badges, and some schools have parent volunteers who systematically patrol the hallways. Establishing drug-free zones around schools is also aimed at stemming the incidences of violence.

In suburban northern Virginia, near Washington, D.C., Fairfax County school officials are using hand-held metal detectors to search students whom school officials suspect of carrying weapons. (See cover photo.)

"We're concerned with the safety of students and teachers," says Walt Mika, president of the Fairfax Teachers Association. "If different devices and techniques can establish safe schools, we support them."

To make schools safer, many school systems, following the professional advice of police and security specialists, have hired security directors on staff.

Some experts believe new schools must be built with an emphasis on security. Entrances featuring electronic surveillance, windows designed for quick escape, and wide visibility within buildings—to keep close tabs on who comes and goes—are three elements they most often recommend.

NEA members across the country are deeply involved in safety efforts. A Kansas-NEA task force on violence, for instance, has recommended that state legislators create a system to compile data on the incidence of violence in public schools. K-NEA is pushing for legislation that would require school districts to develop plans to ensure the safety of all students and school personnel if an armed aggressor enters the premises.

"Our members have told us about several incidents of violence in Kansas schools, but our task force found that no state agency collects data on the situation," says K-NEA President Chuck Tilman. "We believe it's the state's responsibility to gather such information and to help establish programs that will ensure the safety of students and educational employees."

Ron Holt

"Educators and students need good security to ensure that the learning process isn't stymied. That's basic: people can't function properly when they fear for their well-being."

—Carolyn Hart
High school teacher
Atlanta, Georgia

NEA members are also working hard to limit access to the automatic firearms like the AK-47 assault rifle used in the Stockton massacre last winter. In July, the over 8,600 delegates to the NEA Representative Assembly passed a resolution calling for tighter controls on the sale of handguns, commonly called Saturday Night Specials, and the outlawing of Uzi submachine guns and AK-47 assault rifles.

But, in the long run, school safety is an issue that goes beyond security measures and guns. Schools, many NEA members are stressing, need to change in ways that help prevent violence from occurring in the first place.

One example: the social organization of large, anonymous schools can be changed to create smaller, more personalized environments that reduce alienation and distrust between students and teachers and within peer groups. Another: schools need to send the message that there are peaceful means to resolve disputes. In places like Racine, Wisc., and Falls Church, Va., mediation of student disputes is creating a more positive environment and teaching students coping, communication, leadership, and peacemaking skills.

Schools also need to closely involve the entire school community in safety efforts. In California, the United Teachers of Los Angeles has bargained a shared decision making process that will bring together teachers and local residents right at the school building level.

Out of this process, NEA members believe, will come codes of conduct for students and serious, coordinated attempts to address the issue of weapons, school violence, and the general safety of school campuses.

Ensuring safety and security in schools requires coordination and concentration of resources at all levels—and strategies that include both prevention and control activities.

Only a well-thought out combination of approaches will create and maintain schools where students enjoy an environment conducive to learning, and school staffers can do their jobs free from fear.

—Ron Holt

Steps Towards Security

► *Plan now.* Don't wait until you have a problem, or until parents and reporters start clamoring to know what you're doing about school security.

► *Assess your school climate.* Identify the school's needs and concerns, examine the underlying causes of student disorder, seek corrective measures, and establish priorities for improvements.

► *Impress upon students, parents, and administrators that school security is everyone's business, everyday.* The worst mistake anyone can make is to assume that security is someone else's responsibility.

► *Work with your community.* Community members should have a part in developing a crisis-intervention plan.

► *Develop a good working relationship with your local police department.* Local police officers can help you assess your needs, advise you on security hardware, and help you put together a crisis response plan.

► *Keep abreast of what's happening in school security.* The NEA Professional Library offers a new publication, *School Violence: A Survival Guide for School Staff,* 48 pp. Stock No. 0243-1, $6.95. NEA Professional Library, P. O. Box 509, West Haven , CT 06516

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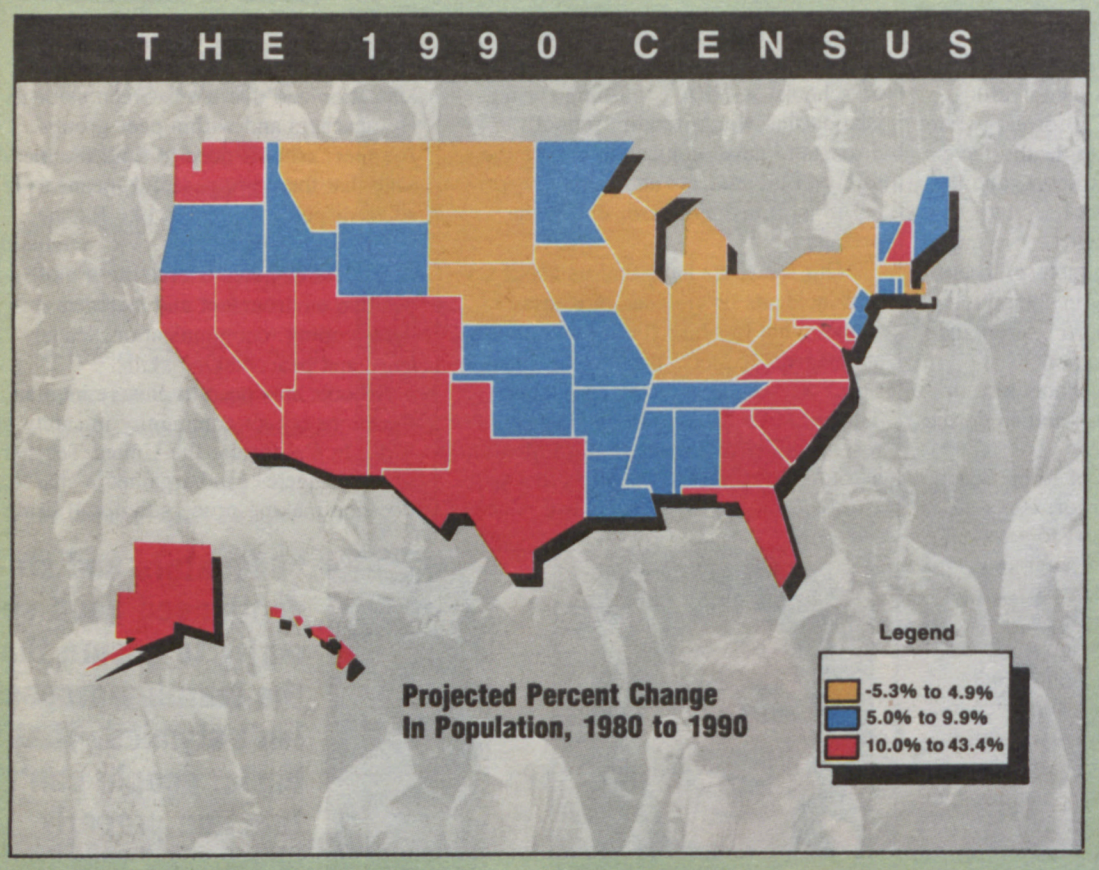


Money, Power, and Statistics

Next spring—for the 20th time in 200 years—our government will count us. On April 1, 1990, the U.S. Bureau of the Census will begin the nation's largest data collection and statistical operation, counting an expected 250 million people in over 100 million households.

High stakes in visibility, money, and power ride on the Census results. The new population figures will be used to reapportion the 435 seats in the U.S. House of Representatives, set state legislative district boundaries, and distribute billions of dollars in federal and state aid.

"The Census is much more than an exercise in civic responsibility," says NEA Government Relations Director Ken Melley. "It will determine what voices are heard in the U.S. Congress and in state legislatures nationwide."

"And if the census is accurate," adds Charles Williams, NEA's Human and Civil Rights director, "it will result in more minority voices being heard and more minority students and communities receiving their share of resources."

Congressional support for public education may be at stake as well. Many of the Northeastern and Midwestern congressional districts that have lost the most people since 1980 are home to some of public education's staunchest advocates in the House of Representatives. In addition, 13 of the 36 minority members of Congress are from the districts with the largest anticipated population losses.

Given the critical ways census data will be used, it's essential that all Americans be counted. This year, the Census Bureau, with help from NEA-HCR and other advocacy groups, is working to make sure inner-city residents, the homeless, and non-English speakers are counted. NEA and other groups hope to raise $100,000 for materials to reach targeted communities.

This year, the Census Bureau is hoping that educators—by teaching students and their families about the Census—can help ensure a correct count.

To that end, the Bureau is sponsoring a 1990 Census Education Project. The Project kit has four major components:

► an *Educator's Guide to the 1990 Census*, which provides background information, a Census glossary, and suggestions for how and when to use the kit

► a leaflet listing ideas for school activities—poster contests, historical exhibits, and the like—designed to increase community awareness of the Census

► 10 social studies, mathematics, science, and language arts lesson plans for K-12 teachers, complete with reproducible student worksheets

► a *Teaching Resources Guide*, which lists Census Bureau products and information useful in the classroom, including wall maps, special reports, and computer resources—then tells you how to get them.

Last spring, a copy of the Census Education Project kit was mailed to each of the nation's school principals and school district superintendents, with the request that copies be made for every teacher. If you haven't received a copy, please check with your principal, or contact the Bureau of the Census, Data User Service Division, Washington, DC 20233, 202-763-1510. Supplies are limited.

"The effects of this Census will last for the rest of this century," notes NEA President Keith Geiger, "and will determine the quality of life for many of our students. We've got to do whatever we can to help citizens understand its importance—and their critical role in making it work."

Regional Census Centers

The Census Bureau regional offices listed below are excellent sources of Census information.

Atlanta: 404-347-2274
Boston: 617-565-7078
Charlotte: 704-371-6144
Chicago: 312-409-4619
Dallas: 214-767-7105
Denver: 303-969-7750
Detroit: 313-354-1990
Kansas City: 816-891-7562
Los Angeles: 818-892-6674
New York: 212-264-4730
Philadelphia: 215-597-8313
Seattle: 206-728-5314

WASHINGTON WATCH

Education Then and Now

These days you don't need a newspaper to pinpoint the burning issues in education: a history book—even an old encyclopedia—works just as well. Compare the 1952 *Colliers Year Book* (excerpted in italics below) with today's education news.

No progress was made [in the last year] toward obtaining Federal aid for state education programs.

1989: Congress is considering a significant increase in education funding for Fiscal Year 1990 (which would fund programs for the 1990-91 school year), but in real terms that proposed spending level is far short of FY 1980 levels.

Trends that continued from [last] year included rising costs of school construction...

1989: An Education Writers Association study released in April revealed that of the nation's 88,000 school buildings, a fourth are shoddy, a third are inadequate because of deferred maintenance or booming enrollment, and more than half were built quickly and cheaply after World War II.

...increasing school population...

1989: After a 13-year decline, school population began to rise once again in 1984. This time around, though, the total increase is less significant than the growing percentage of students who are disadvantaged, handicapped, or limited in English proficiency.

...lack of sufficient teaching personnel...

1989: As in 1951, qualified teachers are in short supply, particularly in certain geographic regions, in certain academic areas, and from minority groups.

...and overcrowded schools.

1989: More than a fourth of California's high school students are in classes of 36 or more.

The question of academic freedom continued to be significant...

1989: Efforts to censor textbooks and other materials are more numerous and more successful this year than last.

...but there were signs of successful resistance to the spread of policies curtailing professional liberty.

1989: Those signs then as now include NEA's efforts in the areas of professional autonomy, academic freedom, and site-based decision making.

—Michael Pons, NEA Government Relations

Local Look

IOWA

An arbitrator recently awarded Davenport high school teachers $1.6 million in back pay—by far the largest public employee grievance award in the state's history. The money was divided among 150 teachers, with some collecting as much as $20,000.

The issue: was the Davenport school district required to pay high school teachers extra for teaching a sixth class? The district traditionally paid teachers an additional 20 percent of their salaries for a sixth class. But in 1986, the school system added a sixth class to many teachers' schedules without paying them for it. Citing the district's past practice, an arbitrator told the schools to pay up.

None too happy with the decision, district officials retaliated by announcing 40 layoffs and openly suggesting that if teachers returned some or all of the money, fewer layoffs would be needed.

The Association stood its ground, the full $1.6 million was paid to teachers last summer (with financial help from an additional property tax), and no layoffs materialized.

"The biggest victory," says Davenport Education Association President Carol Ashbacher, "is that this year teachers will have five—not six—classes. Having our prep periods back is the most important thing. The money's an added bonus."

IDAHO

The 1,150-member Boise Education Association doesn't claim to be clairvoyant, but the fortune cookies it distributed to returning teachers and administrators last month did contain some prudent advice. "A wise person," the goodies hinted, "supports the Boise Education Association."

The cookies were a way of uniting educators as they faced a crisis in contract negotiations. At press time, BEA and the district hadn't reached agreement despite several months of negotiations. At issue were class size and the work day.

The district has been unwilling to place a cap on the number of students per class or to grant preparation time and a duty-free lunch to elementary teachers, explains BEA President Jody Clark.

Those last two items are a matter of equity, Clark notes. Elementary teachers are the only ones in the district not afforded such rights.

PEACEFUL DECADE IN CONNECTICUT

Mike Lydick

Edward Malczyk talks to other Southington strikers during 1979 strike.

Remembering the Last Strike

In September 1979, the atmosphere in Southington, Conn., was tense. Negotiations between the Southington Education Association and the school board had dragged on for more than a year. The previous contract had taken two years to negotiate. When negotiations broke off altogether and a strike vote was called, 97 percent of SEA's roughly 400 members approved the strike.

It was a strong strike. While SEA was out, only three teachers crossed the picket line. And after five days, when the strikers came back to work, they had a contract.

That was then, this is 1989—and in the intervening decade, Connecticut hasn't seen a teachers' strike. A binding arbitration law passed just too late to prevent the Southington work stoppage has kept the state's schools running smoothly.

This month Southington teachers will commemorate the 1979 strike. Wearing commemorative T-shirts and buttons, in the hall where they held the 1979 post-strike rally, they'll applaud the arbitration law that made that kind of struggle a thing of the past.

"Since we've had the law there's more of a feeling of harmony among teachers and between teachers and the administration," says Don De Mers, who was president of SEA during the strike—and began a fresh term in the same office last June. "We still have our grievances, but the binding arbitration law has made it easier to work things out."

During the past decade binding arbitration itself has gotten to be a real last resort in Connecticut: about 90 percent of negotiations have led to agreement without outside intervention.

TENNESSEE

The Metro Nashville Education Association successfully beat back an attempt to slash its salary schedule as part of an effort to reduce the school system's $261 million budget by $21 million.

MNEA officials heard rumblings last fall that at least one board member, perhaps others, had concluded that the salary index was too expensive to maintain. But MNEA members convinced a majority of the board that tinkering with their salary schedule was bad policy.

"Our members made the difference," says MNEA President Lynda Burton.

"Now that we've saved our index," Burton continued, "we want to go on and regain the programs that we've lost because of budget cuts. We hope to involve all our members in lobbying to secure adequate—and better than adequate—funding for our schools."

The 25-year-old salary index was constructed by the previous city teachers association, with help from the NEA, before the city and county school systems were merged. It's a career-oriented structure that interrelates teacher and administrator salaries and provides sizable rewards for experience.

KANSAS

Five elementary schools—in Hutchinson, Junction City, Towanda, Lawrence, and Manhattan—are deep into site-based decision making, thanks to a K-NEA-backed state program. The five got started last year with grants averaging $7,000 each—part of a pilot program adopted by the legislature in 1988.

"It's allowed us to expand the local commitment to site-based decision making," says Phyllis Moore, a fourth-grade teacher at one of the winning schools—Manhattan's Amanda Arnold Elementary School—and a member of NEA-Manhattan. "We've used some of the extra money to bring in outside consultants and to buy access to the expertise of our own staff—in science, for example. Better science is one of the project's main goals."

A key factor in selecting the winning schools was the proportion of teachers willing to buy into the plan. The law required the Association president, principal, superintendent, and school board to sign off on it as well.

WEST VIRGINIA

For over 250 members of the Raleigh County Education Association, receiving one day's pay meant victory after a hard-fought battle.

The trouble began last spring when State Superintendent Tom McNeel stepped down from his post and assumed the Raleigh County superintendency, an interim appointment. Then the word got out: McNeel was going to be hired permanently, and at an annual salary of $100,000. With the county in economic distress—substitutes were not getting paid, supplies were on hold—McNeel's salary was a call to action.

RCEA staged a protest rally, school employees wore black for one day, and parents set up picket lines in front of schools.

The teachers were docked a day's pay for not crossing the lines—but the unified protests took effect. McNeel withdrew from the superintendency. Finally, in September, the county's new superintendent decided to give the teachers the withheld pay.

"This is a good example of what a local can do with the support of all its members," says Marie Hamrick, RCEA president. "We really held together.

"But that's not all," Hamrick adds. "We've gained 60 new members."

State Side

Here's the second half of the back-to-school roundup that began in the September *NEA Today*.

SOUTHEAST

Arkansas: AEA successfully lobbied the state legislature for a bill that provides for monthly deductions from pension checks to cover retired AEA-NEA dues. With the bill's passage, AEA-Retired's membership grew from 825 to 2,149 members in six months...**Louisiana:** LAE is revamping its legislative agenda after the Governor vetoed five bills—on topics including salary, due process, and alternative certification—that comprised LAE's entire legislative package. LAE will concentrate on building a stronger political action base, with an eye toward the 1991 elections... **Mississippi:** MAE's education reform proposal, recently presented to the Governor, calls for legislative language that recognizes teaching as a profession in Mississippi, a state professional standards board, a moratorium on issuing emergency teaching certificates, and a commitment by the state legislature to raise teachers salaries to the projected southeastern average over the next five years... **South Carolina:** SCEA's top legislative priority is a retirement option for teachers with 25 years experience. SCEA expects the initiative to become law in 1990.

PACIFIC

Montana: In February, the Montana supreme court ruled that the state's education funding structure wasn't providing "a basic system of free quality education for all." The remedy: a 2 percent increase in state funding raised by increases in property and income taxes. MEA, one of the original plaintiffs, plans to go back to court and ask for a larger increase... **Nevada:** NSEA lobbying played a big role in getting state legislators to pass a new law limiting K-3 class size to 15 students. Next year lawmakers will establish size limits for grades 4-6; in four years, they'll set limits for grades 7-12...**Oregon:** OEA's lobbying efforts paid off last year when the state legislature increased basic school support by 15 percent and approved an amendment allowing teachers to retire with full benefits after 30 years regardless of age...**Washington:** WEA embarked on a major long-term restructuring effort for the state's public schools. Last year, the focus was on reducing class size; this year, on salaries and restructuring schools.

MID-ATLANTIC

Ohio: The state's education system faces major changes, with the recent passage of the Omnibus Education Reform Act of 1989. The law calls for open enrollment within districts and alternative certification for teachers. And it allows exemptions from state certification laws and regulations (with union concurrence) for school districts rated excellent. The state would also be able to certify districts as educationally deficient... **Maryland:** MSTA is gearing up to respond to a major education reform report by a Governor's commission calling for all K-12 schools to be accredited. Those that don't meet the standards would be closed...**North Carolina:** Site-based decision making will be NCAE's top priority. For the first time, NCAE's three-day summer leadership conference was devoted entirely to the topic...**Virginia:** With VEA's help, Doug Wilder may become the first black Governor in the United States. VEA is actively supporting the Wilder campaign.

WEST

Arizona: An AEA-backed coalition has kicked off a campaign to collect 200,000 signatures and $1 million to put an initiative overhauling school finance on the ballot in 1990...**Nebraska:** NSEA locals have the pleasant task of negotiating the formula for divvying up their district's share of $20 million of state aid—first ever just for teachers salaries...**Oklahoma:** A special legislative session on education finance—called at OEA's behest—is in recess till November while a citizen committee—including OEA members—develops a consensus on priorities and sources of new money...**Utah:** UEA's goal in a recent special legislative session: keep Utah's tax base intact; the schools can use it...**Wyoming:** WEA leaders aren't the only ones thinking that the state needs to look to new sources of taxation—other than taxes on natural resources—to support the public schools.

NORTHEAST

Maine: Last spring the legislature passed MTA's funding incentive proposal—now it's time to fund it. The proposal offers districts incentives to provide planning time, smaller class sizes, and better use of support staff; offers grants to teachers pursuing higher degrees; and provides a lump sum per teacher payment...**Massachusetts:** A state budget cut axing at least $10 million of aid to local districts means harder times for already starved schools. Likely results: layoffs of as many as one teacher in eight, even less art, music, and physical education classes...**New York:** NEA/NY is closely monitoring several new state programs—a mentor-intern program, accountability plans that could ignore staff concerns or bring more testing, and site-based decision making programs not clearly tied to collective bargaining...**Rhode Island:** NEA-RI is mounting an NEA-supported drive for adequate compensation. At the same time, the Association is capitalizing on a groundswell of community support for site-based decision making... **Vermont:** Vermont-NEA is mobilizing grassroots support for a property tax reform program to be presented in the 1990 legislature. The past year saw taxpayers defeat 37 school district budgets.

MIDWEST

Iowa: After seven years of effort, ISEA succeeded in helping create an autonomous professional standards board—made up mostly of educators—that will set standards and issue licenses for teachers and administrators. **Minnesota:** The state's legislature—prodded by MEA for years—passed a law last spring that established an autonomous licensure board controlled by teachers. In addition, MEA is exploring the possibility of setting up 10-30 regional bargaining units for teachers statewide. **Indiana:** Although unsuccessful last year, the Indiana State Teachers Association will push again for a law guaranteeing full bargaining rights for ESP. **Wisconsin:** Intense lobbying by WEAC members paid off recently when the state legislature passed a law improving early retirement provisions for public employees. Under the new formula, teachers will be able to retire as early as age 57 with 30 years experience.

PER CAPITA INCOME

National Average Income at $16,444

Residents of the Rocky Mountain states have the lowest average per capita income of any region in the United States, according to U.S. Department of Commerce figures. Rocky Mountain citizens made an average of $14,282 last year, compared with the Southeast's $14,331, and the New England region's pacesetting $20,013 average.

The top state in per capita income is Connecticut—$22,761; the lowest—Mississippi, $10,992.

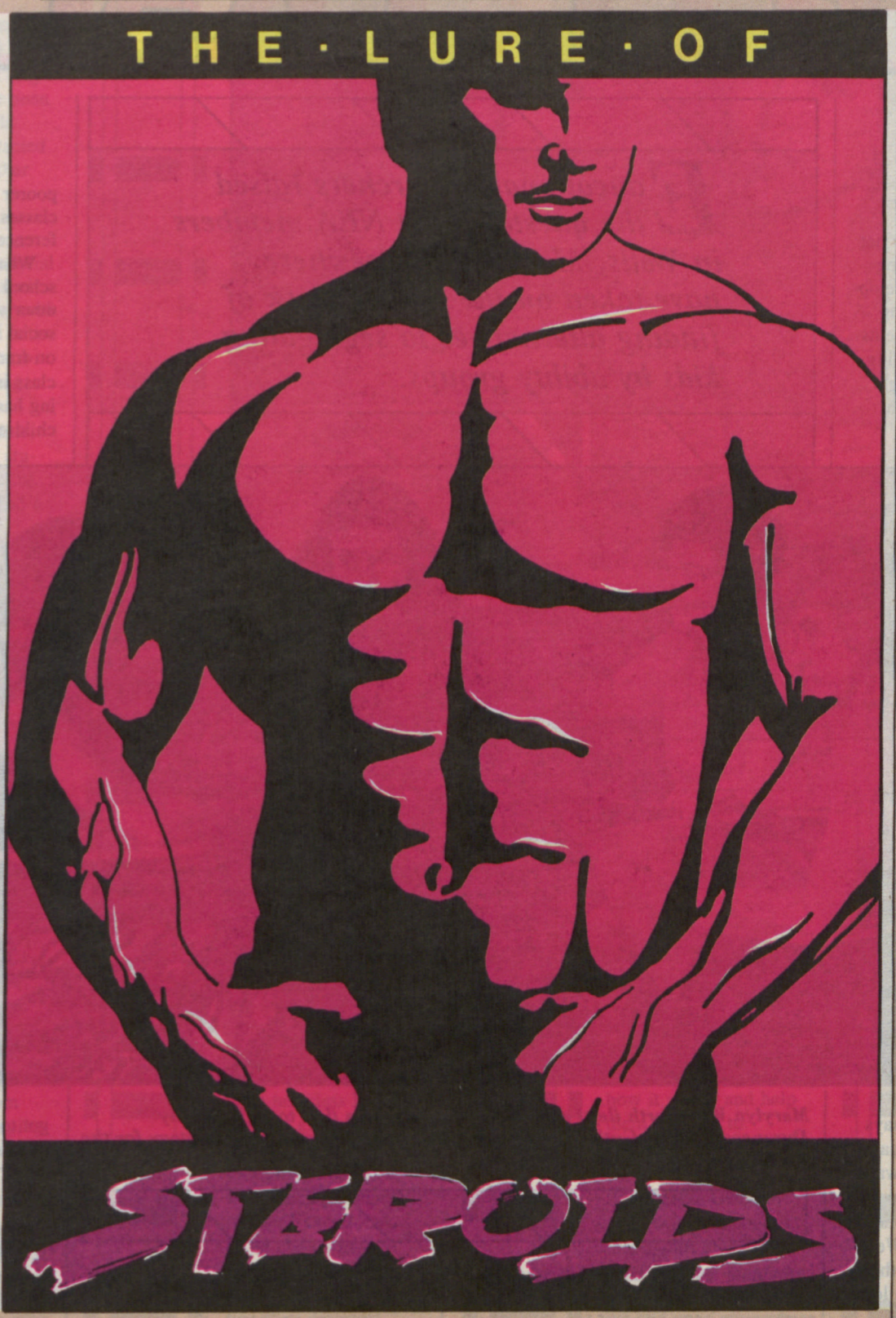
Incomes For 1988, Followed By Each State's Ranking By Income And Change From 1987

State	Income	Rank	Change
Alabama	$12,604	43	+5.5%
Alaska	19,514	4	+6.3
Arizona	14,887	30	−4.5
Arkansas	12,172	47	+5.5
California	18,855	8	+5.7
Colorado	16,417	18	+5.2
Connecticut	22,761	1	+7.4
Delaware	17,699	9	+7.9
D.C.	21,667	*	+7.9
Florida	16,546	17	+6.2
Georgia	14,980	28	+4.7
Hawaii	16,898	13	+7.7
Idaho	12,657	42	+6.7
Illinois	17,611	11	+7.3
Indiana	14,721	32	+5.6
Iowa	14,764	31	+3.4
Kansas	15,905	21	+5.0
Kentucky	12,795	38	+6.6
Louisiana	12,193	46	+5.9
Maine	14,976	29	+7.1
Maryland	19,314	5	+6.3
Massachusetts	20,701	3	+8.7
Michigan	16,387	19	+6.3
Minnesota	16,787	15	+5.5
Mississippi	10,992	50	+6.7
Missouri	15,492	22	+5.8
Montana	$12,670	41	+3.1%
Nebraska	15,184	26	+6.2
Nevada	17,440	12	+6.3
New Hampshire	19,016	7	+6.2
New Jersey	21,882	2	+7.7
New Mexico	12,481	44	+4.9
New York	19,299	6	+7.2
North Carolina	14,128	34	+6.0
North Dakota	12,720	40	−1.9
Ohio	15,485	23	+6.1
Oklahoma	13,269	37	+5.3
Oregon	14,982	27	+6.9
Pennsylvania	16,168	20	+6.4
Rhode Island	16,793	14	+7.4
South Carolina	12,764	39	+6.1
South Dakota	12,475	45	−0.6
Tennessee	13,659	36	+6.1
Texas	14,640	33	+5.4
Utah	12,013	48	+5.5
Vermont	15,382	25	+7.4
Virginia	17,640	10	+7.0
Washington	16,569	16	+6.0
West Virginia	11,658	49	+6.1
Wisconsin	15,444	24	+4.9
Wyoming	13,718	35	+7.9
NATIONAL	**16,444**		**+6.2**

Last month's StateSide box showed that the state share of school finance continues to grow and now accounts for 50.2 percent of total school revenues. The federal share, however, continues to decline and now stands at just 6.3 percent. Schools receive 43.5 percent from local sources.

Health

Information about health factors that affect the way students learn.



Mike Nelson, M.D., is president of the medical staff at St. Joseph's West Mesa Hospital, Albuquerque, New Mexico. In addition, he chairs both the American Academy of Pediatrics' Committee on Sports Medicine and the New Mexico Pediatric Society. Dr. Nelson

recently spent two days at the National Steroid Consensus meeting sponsored by the United States Olympic Committee, the National College Athletic Association, and the National Federation of State High School Associations.

Q. How many children and teenagers in the U.S. use anabolic steroids? At what age do they start?
A. Studies of a representative population in senior high schools throughout the country currently indicate that 10-11 percent of the young men and 1-2 percent of the young women have used or are using anabolic steroids. Of those young men, about 30 to 40 percent aren't involved in athletics; they're using steroids for social and cosmetic reasons. At least a third begin using steroids before age 16—that's before their skeletal system matures.

Q. What are the harmful side effects of anabolic steroids?
A. In males, the temporary side effects include decreased sperm production, atrophy of the testicles, acne, and a decrease in HDL cholesterol—a decrease that's associated with an increased risk of heart attack and stroke. Other side effects include the development of breast tissue and liver tumors.

We're not sure of the long-term effects. Steroid use is associated with hypertension, but blood pressure returns to normal when steroid use stops. In immature adolescents, the most important side effect is premature closure of bony growth plates, which can keep them from reaching what would have been their full height.

Q. Despite the harmful side effects, young people are still using steroids. Why?
A. In the first place, although we know anabolic steroids have temporary side effects and we suspect that they may stunt growth, we don't know for sure of any long-term health consequences. Student athletes have said they know of athletes who've taken steroids over a long period of time without apparent serious aftereffects.

In addition, adolescents normally feel invulnerable, so even if there are long-term consequences, they may choose to ignore them.

Q. What are the warning signs of anabolic steroid use?
A. Exactly the same as the signs of puberty—acne and lowering of the voice—but steroid users undergo these changes much more rapidly than is normal at their age. In addition, athletes will show an increase in muscle mass and in strength. Some users retain fluid; some get puffy in the face.

Q. What are common misconceptions children and teenagers have about steroids?
A. One is that anabolic steroids by themselves will increase your strength and body mass. The truth is that to obtain those results, you have to keep up a strong conditioning program along with the steroid use.

In addition, while many people believe that only athletes in strength sports like football and wrestling use steroids, athletes have been found to use them in virtually every activity, including endurance sports like long-distance running.

Q. Is it easy to get anabolic steroids? Are there any cases in which their use is legitimate?
A. Steroids are readily available from a variety of sources—the most common is the local muscle-building gym. Unfortunately, some health professionals still provide them, and according to survey responses, as many as 20 to 30 percent of users get their drugs from physicians, nurses, pharmacists, and veterinarians.

There are very few legitimate medical uses for anabolic steroids.

Q. Where do children get the idea that anabolic steroids can make them big and strong?
A. From body-building magazines, from older peers who've used steroids and, unfortunately, from some coaches. In addition, the media have devoted extensive coverage to steroid use.

Q. How can we eliminate steroid use when many children know that athletes they admire engage in it?
A. The most important message we need to give students is that using anabolic steroids is simply a form of cheating. Coaches need to let their athletes know that this is cheating and it's unacceptable. Certainly education about the effects of steroids is important, but by itself it isn't enough.

Q. What can schools do to help solve the problem?
A. Treat anabolic steroid use like any other type of substance abuse: prohibit it and establish appropriate consequences for breaking the rule. One appropriate consequence would be suspension from participation in athletics. Because of the increase in nonathletes' use of anabolic steroids, these drugs need to be included in the overall substance abuse program for all students at middle and high schools.

Q. Can you summarize the American Academy of Pediatrics' position on steroids?
A. The use of anabolic steroids should be prohibited. There is potential for serious growth and health side effects, and the use of these drugs is a form of cheating.

NEW METHODS

ARE WE ON THE RIGHT TRACK?

Educational researchers raised the question, but NEA members in Wells, Maine, and elsewhere have taken on the tougher task of finding alternatives to segregating kids by ability groups.

By everyone else's standards, Cindy Guthro was a good teacher. She was devoted to her students and dedicated to the teaching profession. She worked hard at developing creative lesson plans and opening new worlds of literature to her students.

But Guthro, an eighth-grade reading teacher at Wells (Maine) Junior High School, was troubled. "Despite what people were telling me, I felt I just wasn't being as effective as I should be. I needed to do something more, to change the way I taught so all my students would have greater opportunities to learn."

Guthro's dilemma two years ago mirrored a larger issue at Wells Junior High, part of a small school system located some 40 miles southeast of Portland and one of 26 schools participating in NEA's Mastery in Learning Project. When the 37-member faculty decided to examine the school's system of "ability grouping" (really a kind of tracking), the ensuing process prompted a lot of soul-searching.

"Many faculty members thought the way we were grouping wasn't effective," says Sue Walters, an eighth-grade language arts teacher. "At first, a lot of us wanted to move toward even more rigid groupings than the four levels—honors, accelerated, average, and basic—Wells had at the time. But after reading the research, we began to take a second look at our goals.

"What we read challenged our beliefs," adds Walters. "Many of us were amazed to find little or no research supporting the grouping process we had in place. In asking what seemed to be a simple question, we discovered we had to reexamine everything."

Marylyn Wentworth (left) and Wells, Me., teachers (left to right) Sandy Duranceau, Cindy Guthro, and Mary Albans-Rand discuss their strategy for the parents' forum.

The research told Wells teachers that tracking was a process easily abused or misused despite its stated goal of providing learning tailored to students' needs. Ability grouping can be used to address specific areas of learning—but it can also limit students' progress, confining them within preset boundaries instead of stretching their abilities.

Former NEA President Mary Hatwood Futrell, one of tracking's severest critics, says tracking systems were originally set up with good intentions. "But now a tracking system's likely to be so rigid that once caught in its grip, a student can't get out."

Researchers agree. They point to inequities that result from tracking: minority and low-income children are overrepresented in low achievement groups; students on low tracks often face low expectations and lack adequate peer models; sometimes low tracks offer watered-down instruction.

"The research was reporting things I'd recognized in our school," said Mary Albans-Rand, a seventh-grade social studies teacher at Wells Junior High. "There was an economic stratification in classes: the wealthier students dominated the gifted and talented classes, while the poorer ones often occupied the remedial classes. That reinforced a class difference the students already felt."

What the Wells teachers found in their school is common to tracked systems in other schools, notes RAND Corporation social scientist Jeannie Oakes, an expert on tracking. "Even when race or social class is the same," says Oakes, "tracking has caused stratification among children."

Oakes recently completed a report for the National Science Foundation on tracking in mathematics and science, analyzing data from 6,000 teachers in 1,200 schools. The report, scheduled for release in the fall, will present "provocative results" about how tracking affects not only students but teachers, Oakes says.

An NEA tracking study, also due out this fall, from Johns Hopkins University researchers, "won't just examine the impact of tracking," says Leon Horne, who chairs the NEA Executive Committee's Subcommittee on Tracking. "It suggests alternatives. We've got to learn to reshape our thinking and offer all teachers ways to deal with students' diversity."

Wells teachers agree that each school staff must devise its own solutions to tracking. At Wells the teachers chose alternative scheduling and cooperative learning—with students helping one another.

"We added an eighth period, an activity period in which the students are heterogeneously mixed," says Walters. "And we made the allied arts classes truly heterogeneous. Before, they were heterogeneous in theory, but because the tracking system affected the whole school, they ended up tracked, too."

Many teachers attended workshops that explored the concept of cooperative

NEW DIRECTIONS

learning. Those who put into practice the principles they'd examined saw results very quickly.

"I did a lot of cooperative learning that first semester," says Cindy Guthro, "and I've seen it work. I saw kids who'd never interacted before work together and support one another."

During one class, says Guthro, a remedial student joined two advanced students to work on a space-related activity that required problem solving, writing, and other skills.

"For the first time, the two advanced students realized that the remedial student had a great deal to offer," says Guthro, "and the remedial student realized that the other boys not only listened to what he said, but knew little more than he did about the concepts. In one lesson he gained confidence and respect, and they learned not to prejudge others. Together, they closed the gap between them."

That's just one of the ways gifted and talented youngsters are actually getting wider opportunities through cooperative learning methods than they did through tracking.

"Something else that's important about this shift away from homogeneous grouping is that it makes school more like outside life," says Marylyn Wentworth, Mastery in Learning consultant to the Wells faculty. "We're not usually surrounded by people who are just like us."

The project has been so successful that this school year more teachers will be using cooperative learning and the remedial track will be gone altogether.

"There'll still be some homogeneous classes in math and science—that's understandable," says Wentworth. "Not everyone feels comfortable with the change, and for very good reasons."

After sixth-grade math teacher Roberta Jones tried heterogeneous grouping, she decided she'd rather have her class homogeneously grouped. "With the heterogeneous grouping, I ended up very much the disciplinarian," says Jones. "The class was unwieldy; I couldn't give any students the attention they deserved."

Wentworth says the key to dismantling tracking is to explore alternative, appropriate ways of teaching the new groups. "Switching the class to a heterogeneous group and expecting the teacher to use teaching methods meant for homogeneous classes makes the teacher's job virtually impossible," says Wentworth. "One of our math teachers has now received cooperative learning training and is using it in her classroom with great success. She plans to work with other teachers to show them how it works and help them open up to change."

Walters, Guthro, and Wentworth agree that a shift away from tracking must be gradual and made in a supportive and open atmosphere if it is to last.

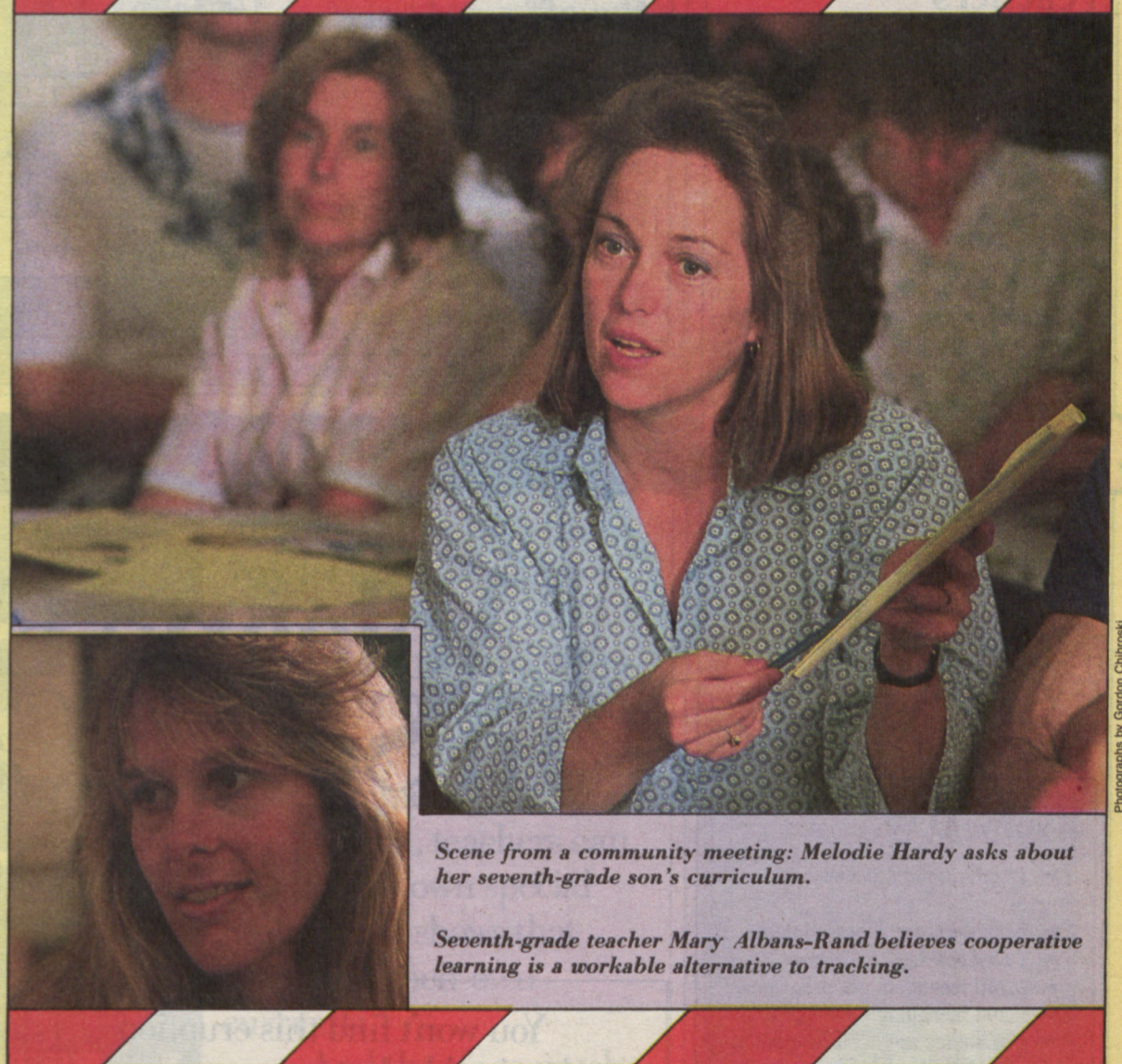
"Communication's critical," says Walters. "Even the teachers who didn't agree with the move had a role: we needed people to question every change. We had to constantly reexamine our decisions. We also worked in teams—each grade level decided how far to go toward heterogeneous groupings."

"Above all else," says Wentworth, "you must create a learning community. The administration, teachers, and parents must work together to widen the opportunities for the children."

To that end, the Wells faculty held a parents' forum last summer to discuss the changes in the fall schedule.

"Parents' most pressing concern was whether their child was the subject of an educational experiment," says Bob Wheeler, an eighth-grade science teacher. "I told them every lesson is an experiment as we search for better ways for their children to learn. That's what teaching's all about."

—Anita Merina



Scene from a community meeting: Melodie Hardy asks about her seventh-grade son's curriculum.

Seventh-grade teacher Mary Albans-Rand believes cooperative learning is a workable alternative to tracking.

Photographs by Gordon Chibroski

DATA BANK

Kids' Dream Teachers

Which celebrity do four- to six-year-olds want as their teacher?

	Percent
Big Bird	53
Bill Cosby	19
Michael J. Fox	10
Roseanne Barr	9
George Bush	9

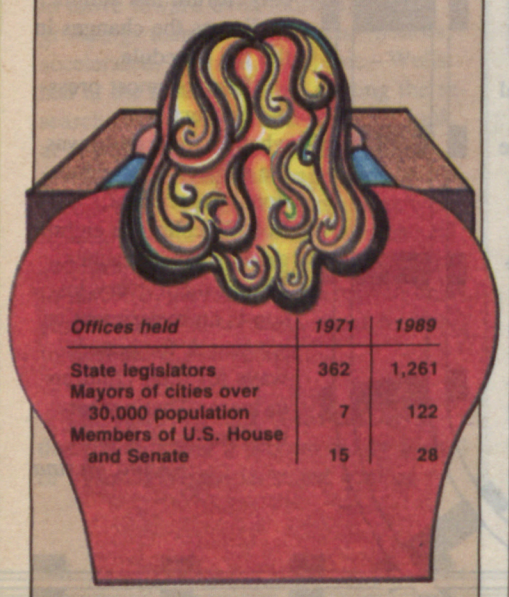
Source: Playskool Corp.

Every Day...

► 27 children die because of poverty.
► 9 children are shot to death.
► 1,849 children are abused.
► 2,740 teenagers get pregnant.
► 1,293 teenagers have babies.
► 676 babies are born to mothers who've had inadequate prenatal care.
► 3,288 children run away from home.

Citing these statistics, a recent *Boston Globe* special report stated, "Twenty percent of American children—13 million—live in poverty, where the world is one of dangerous edges.... Their lives are the stuff of each painful and sometimes trendy moment in the news."

Women Elected To Public Office



Offices held	1971	1989
State legislators	362	1,261
Mayors of cities over 30,000 population	7	122
Members of U.S. House and Senate	15	28

Source: National Women's Political Caucus

The Payoff

If college degrees could be measured solely in monetary terms, here's one way to analyze costs and benefits.

Source: Newsweek estimates and NEA Research. Cost of degree is based on 1-3 years of graduate school tuition.

Average First-Year Income	$65,100	$52,000	$31,247	$26,000	$22,000	$18,500
School Attended	Harvard Business School	Georgetown Law School	U. of Michigan (nonresident)	UCLA (nonresident)	Columbia U. School of Journalism	Illinois State U. College of Ed. (nonresident)
Job	Financial consultant	Lawyer	Engineer	Social worker	Reporter	Teacher
Total Cost of Degree	$31,300	$37,800	$20,796	$ 6,486	$13,308	$11,506

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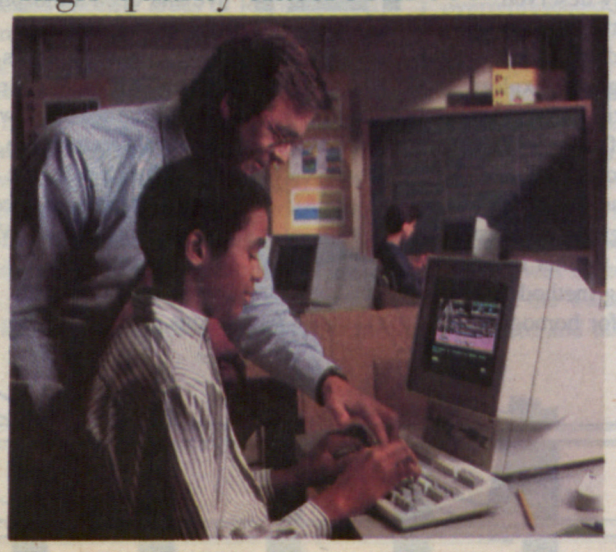

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RESOURCES

TV/Radio Tips

Art of the Western World—*PBS, Mondays, Oct. 2-Nov. 27, 9-10 p.m. ET (closed-captioned).* Join the world's eminent art historians as they explore how life and culture shaped Western art through the centuries. This nine-part series was filmed at 140 locations in 11 countries.

A Family Again—*ABC Afterschool Special Rebroadcast, Thursday, Oct. 12, 4-5 p.m. ET (closed-captioned).* The sudden death of an adored older sister paralyzes 15-year-old Lindsey and her family with emptiness and guilt as they struggle to cope with their loss.

Frog Girl: The Jenifer Graham Story—*CBS Schoolbreak Special, Tuesday, Oct. 17, 4-5 p.m. ET.* When California teenager Jenifer Graham refused to dissect a frog, she was penalized. When she sued to defend her right to act on her principles, she became known as the "frog girl." This dramatization follows vegetarian and animal rights activist Graham as she, her mother, and the Humane Society take their case to the courts.

One Plus One—*PBS, Wednesday, Oct. 18, 8-9 p.m. ET (closed-captioned).* Pat Morita looks at the special efforts of volunteers across the country who work closely with young people, helping them stay in school and widen their horizons.

Student Affairs (working title)—*ABC Afterschool Special, Thursday, Oct. 26, 4-5 p.m. ET (closed-captioned).* During the 24 hours before the Winter Ball, two teenagers must confront a father having an extramarital affair and a former girlfriend's admission that she has a sexually-transmitted disease.

The Ghost of Faffner Hall—*HBO, Mondays, 8:30-9 p.m. ET.* Fughetta Faffner is a music-loving ghost whose mansion was built as a monument to sound. Fughetta and the rest of this new cast of Muppets enlist the aid of special guests James Taylor, Dizzy Gillespie, Los Lobos, and others to illustrate a variety of basic musical concepts and save the musical mansion from Fughetta's greedy descendant Farkas Faffner.

The Power of the Word—*PBS, Fridays, 9-10 p.m. through Oct. 20, check local listings for times.* This series, hosted by Bill Moyers, pairs contemporary poets with live audiences for lively sessions about the poets' work. For a free high school curriculum package, write Moyers: The Power of the Word, P.O. Box 1000, Long Island City, NY 11101.

Schoolboy Father—*Showtime, check local listings for date, time.* A 16-year-old becomes a father and fights for custody when his girlfriend decides to put their child up for adoption. After winning custody, the boy faces the demands of child-rearing and realizes his girlfriend may have been right.

KIDSNET, which provides these listings, has produced a study guide for the Fall 1989 Schoolbreak Specials. Mailed to schools and libraries, the guide's also available free from CBS Educational and Community Services, 51 West 52nd Street, New York, NY 10019, or from KIDSNET, 6856 Eastern Ave., Suite 208, Washington, DC 20012.

ware has been developed with the help of more than 200 active teachers nationwide. In fact, IBM has courseware programs for kindergarten through high school—courseware designed to complement curriculums and current textbooks.

But courseware isn't the only way IBM is bringing subjects to life. IBM LinkWay, for example, is a new, fun-to-use interactive multimedia tool that actually combines full-motion video, text, sound and color graphics.

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For further information about IBM Educational Systems, write:

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IBM®

Innovation

How NEA members are changing the way schools work.

INDIANA'S TRAINING WAVE

So far, over 1,000 Indiana teachers are part of a unique staff development program that encourages teachers to be decision-makers, trainers, trainees, coaches, learners, and risk-takers. The winning premise: teachers know best.

Who would have thought that a professional development program could transform a school district?

And yet, after three years of experience with the "Teachers Teaching Teachers" program, North Gibson, Ind., schools are changed places.

"There's been a real development of collegiality. We feel energized, rejuvenated, open to new ideas," says fifth-grade teacher Sandy Nixon (lower right).

"And students feel it," Nixon adds. "We're moving away from rote drills. Classes are noisier, but there's a lot more learning going on."

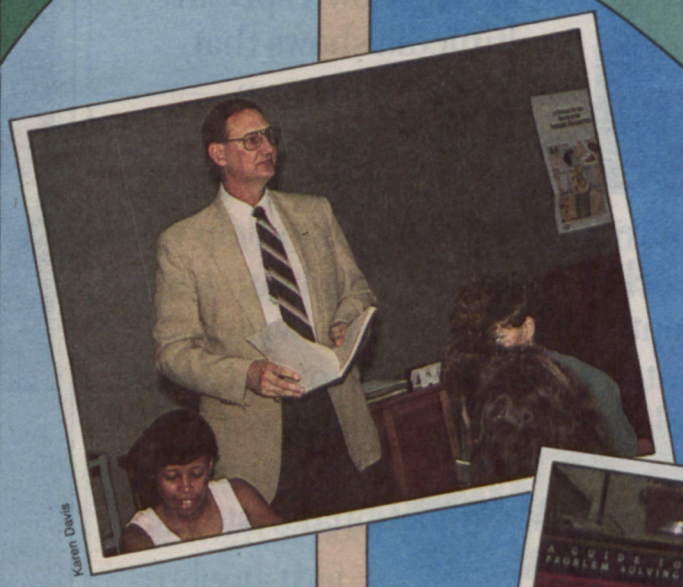
The reason for the turnaround, unlikely as it might seem, is a unique staff development program called "Teachers Teaching Teachers." The brainchild of two local superintendents, the program is run by 24 teachers.

TTT was launched in 1985 with a grant from the state. Unlike most inservice programs, it's structured to offer teachers as much involvement—and authority—as possible, to meet their needs for quality training and coaching, and to give them the freedom to take risks.

Here's how TTT works. Teacher cadre members help select from a nationwide list the training programs they and their colleagues think would benefit them most. Cadre members attend the programs selected, wherever they're offered. On their return, they train other cadre members, who train other teachers in the district, who train teachers in other districts.

In the last three years, the training wave has reached over 1,000 teachers in 18 school districts all over southwestern and central Indiana.

So far, the teachers have been offered training in, among other things, concept attainment and teaching thinking skills. They've focused on adjusting teaching styles to fit their students' differing learning styles. And they've worked on ways to express their own creativity in the classroom. This year, they'll learn more about cooperative learning.



Karen Davis

Karen Davis

Participation in TTT is completely voluntary, and it's not recorded in any way—positive or negative—on teacher evaluations. Still, about 85 percent of North Gibson teachers have enrolled in at least one of the training programs offered. A negotiated agreement provides that teachers who work as trainers or receive training get paid for their time.

Once teachers are trained, peer coaches observe their classrooms to help and encourage them in using what they've learned.

Besides revamping the way teachers teach, TTT has helped transform the school culture. "For so many years, we were caught in our own classrooms," says Nixon. "Now we have many opportunities to talk to one another and to exchange ideas."

High school business teacher and North Gibson Education Association President Dave Specht (above) says, "There's a new spirit of cooperation between teachers and administrators—they ask us for our input now, and they're beginning to trust our judgment about what's best for students and for teachers."

Overall, Specht says, the program has made "a lot of teachers feel a lot better about their profession."

—Stefanie Weiss

RESOURCES

Free or Inexpensive

READING

Teachers and Independent Reading: Suggestions for the Classroom. Center for the Study of Reading, University of Illinois. Gives research-based rationale for encouraging kids to read trade books independently and suggests ways to incorporate independent reading in the elementary classroom. 10 pp. $1.50 each; set of 15 copies, $20. Add sales tax in IL/IN/MI/MN/OH/WI. Prepay to Univ. of Illinois—I.R., P.O. Box 2268, Station A, Champaign, IL 61825-2268.

Home: Where Reading and Writing Begin. Mary W. Hill. Describes ways parents can encourage their children's developing literacy through specially designed family activities. 101 pp. Stock no. 08481. $8.95 plus $2.50 p&h per order. Heinemann Books, 70 Court St., Portsmouth, NH 03801.

MINORITIES/COUNSELING

Financial Aid for Minorities in Business and Law...Education...Engineering and Science... Health Fields... Journalism/Mass Communications... also ***Financial Aid for Minorities: Awards Open to Students with Any Major.*** Series lists government agencies and other sources of postsecondary financial aid of interest to minority youth. $4 each; set of six, $20. Garrett Park Press, P.O. Box 190B, Garrett Park, MD 20896.

ENVIRONMENT

Energy Information for School Children. U.S. Department of Energy. Lists organizations that offer free or inexpensive materials on energy. 11 pp. Free. National Energy Information Center, EI-231, Forrestal Bldg., 1000 Independence Ave., S.W., Rm. 1F-048, Washington, DC 20585.

COUNSELING/ATHLETICS

Pass To Play: Student Athletes and Academics. Richard E. Lapchick. Uses real-life horror stories to argue the need for higher academic standards for student athletes. 48 pp. $6.95. Stock no. 3339-6-00-D. NEA Professional Library, P.O. Box 509, West Haven, CT 06516.

CITIZENSHIP

Murray's Salute to the Flag. Anne Miller Richtel. Consider the Pledge of Allegiance. Here's a simple story/play—written for very young children—about the meaning of each word in the pledge. $2.65 by check to A. M. Richtel, 1126 W. San Jose Ave., Fresno, CA 93711.

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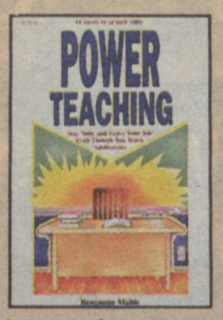

Power Teaching: Stay Sane and Enjoy Your Job Even Though You Teach Adolescents. Benjamin Mahle. A junior high school English teacher (and Association member in Rochester, Minn.) shows how teachers can benefit themselves and their students by being appropriately assertive. 112 pp. $7.95 prepaid. Fearon Teacher Aids, 500 Harbor Blvd., Belmont, CA 94002 or see book club note in Book Beat, p. 33 of this issue.

The "Free or Inexpensive" feature is included in NEA Today *as a service to readers. Items listed are selected by the editors at their discretion from review copies submitted by publishers.*

Since this column is editorial matter rather than advertising, there is no charge for listings.

"We're looking for people to write children's books"

"Writing for children is the perfect way to begin," says the author of 53 children's books. "Your ideas come right out of your own experience. And while it's still a challenge, it's the straightest possible line between you and publication—if you're qualified to seek the success this rewarding field offers."

By Alvin Tresselt, *Dean of Faculty*

An old mansion, deep in the Connecticut woods, is the home of The Institute of Children's Literature.

IF YOU WANT TO WRITE AND GET published, I can't think of a better way to do it than writing books and stories for children and teenagers. Ideas flow naturally right out of your own life experience. While it's still a challenge, the odds of getting that first unforgettable check from a juvenile publisher are better than they are from any other kind of publisher I know.

Later on, you may get other checks from other publishers. But right now, the object is to begin—to break into print—to learn the feeling of writing and selling your work and seeing your name in type. After that, you can decide if you want your writing to take another direction.

But after 30 years of editing, publishing, and teaching—and 53 books of my own—I can tell you this: You'll go a long way before you discover anything as rewarding as writing for young readers.

Your words will never sound as sweet as they do from the lips of a child reading your books and stories. And the joy of creating books and stories that truly reach young people is an experience you'll never have anywhere else.

The soaring children's market

But, that's not all. The financial rewards go far beyond most people's expectations because there's a surprisingly big market out there for writers who are trained to tap it. More than $1 *billion* worth of children's books are purchased annually and some 4,000 diffferent titles share in this bonanza—many by new authors.

Of approximately 500 publishers of books related to children, over 300 of them welcome manuscripts from aspiring writers. And over 400 magazines rely on freelancers to fill their issues. You can imagine how much writing *that* takes!

Yet two big questions bedevil nearly every would-be writer: "Am I really qualified?" and "How can I get started?"

"Am I really qualified?"

This is our definition of a "qualified person": It's someone with an aptitude for writing who can take constructive criticism, learn from it, and turn it into a professional performance. That's the only kind of person we're looking for. The reasons are simple: Our reputation is built on success, and, if prospective students don't have the earmarks of success, we probably can't help them. And we tell them so. It's only fair to both of us.

To help us spot potential authors, we've developed a revealing test for writing aptitude. It's free, and we don't charge for our evaluation. But no one gets into The Institute without passing it. Those who pass and enroll receive our promise: You will complete at least one manuscript ready to submit to a publisher by the time you finish the Course.

One-on-one training with your own instructor

I've learned a lot about writing for children and I love it. Now I'm passing my knowledge on to my students so they can profit from it. When I'm not writing my own books I spend my time at The Institute of Children's Literature, a workshop for new writers that does one thing and does it better than any other educational institution I know of: It trains qualified people to write for young readers.

This is the way I work with my students, and my fellow instructors—all of whom are experienced writers or editors—work more or less the same way.

Learn at your own pace

When you're ready—at your own time and your own pace— you send your assignment to me and I read it and I reread it to get everything out of it you've put into it.

Then I edit your assignment just the way a publishing house editor would—if he had the time. I return it along with a detailed letter explaining my comments. I tell you what your strong points are, what your weaknesses are, and just what you can do to improve. It's a matter of push and pull with each assignment. You push and I pull and between us both, you learn to write.

"—my dream come true!"

This method really works. I wouldn't spend five minutes at it if it didn't. The proof of the pudding is that many students break into print even before they finish the course.

"The thing that gives me the most satisfaction" writes Brandy S. Wells, Greensboro, MD, "is the idea that my story will be read by 150,000 Sunday school children—my dream come true."*

"Seeing my story in print, and knowing that some child out there is reading it and maybe enjoying what I have to say is all the reward I'll ever want," says Win Simpson, New Providence, NJ.

"My how-to article that sold to 4-H Magazine for $75 was my rewrite of a Course assignment," says Jeanne Shoemaker, Birmingham, AL. "My beloved instructor has made this Course one of the highlights of my adult life!"

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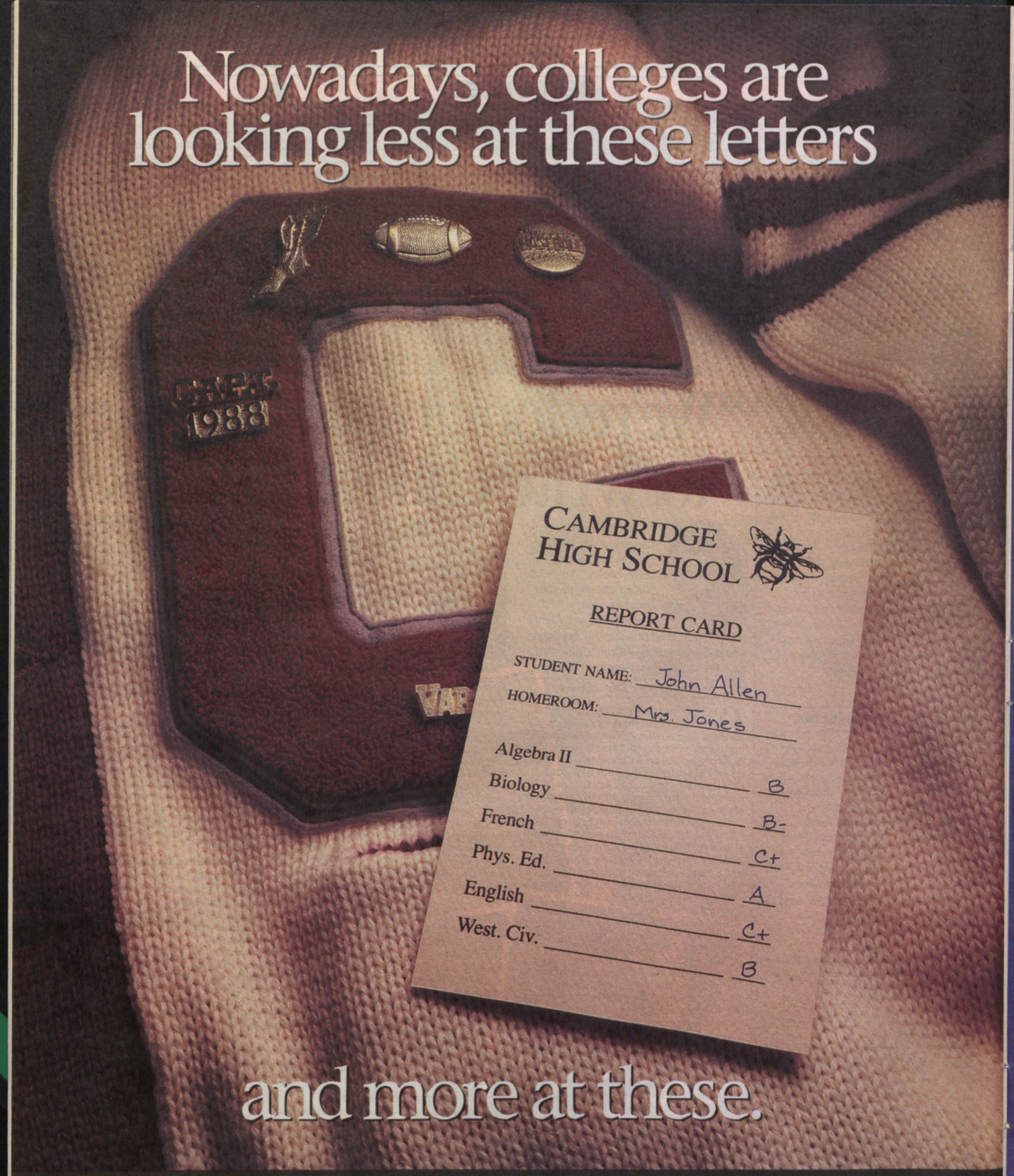
Alvin Tresselt was Vice President and Executive Editor of Parents' Magazine Press, the first editor of *Humpty Dumpty's Magazine for Children*, and a board member of the Author's Guild. His 53 books for young readers have sold over two million copies.

*The testimonials in this ad were provided without remuneration and voluntarily by The Institute's students between 1985 and 1988.

Nowadays, colleges are looking less at these letters



and more at these.

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AT SPACE CAMP

TAKE OFF!

Space: The final frontier. Two special education teachers and 20 students boldly go where no learning disabled kids have gone before.

There are some people who can't say no. And then there are people like Robynn McKinney and Mike Kersjes, who can't *hear* the word.

The two Grand Rapids, Mich., special education teachers were told they couldn't mix educable mentally impaired students with learning disabled kids. They did it anyway, team-taught the mixed group—and the students thrived.

They were told their special education students couldn't establish a Junior Achievement chapter. They did it anyway, and the students—busy promoting and selling computer stands—excelled.

They were told they couldn't bring their special education students to Space Camp, an academically demanding astronaut-training program for middle school and secondary students in Huntsville, Ala. But they did it anyway, and their students equaled—in some cases, excelled—the gifted and talented students they competed against.

Eric Schultz

Robynn McKinney

As a result, their students' confidence has soared. For 17-year-old Dana Barstis, success at Space Camp "means we can accomplish anything in the world that people throw at us."

"Excuse me," the mission director of the Grand Rapids crew says tentatively. "We have a freon loop cautionary warning."

Her fellow students, hunkered down at long tables in Space Camp's authentic Mission Control room, adjust their headsets, face their control panels, and flick the appropriate switches.

In the cockpit, Kersjes—known to his students as "Coach"—helps his student pilots fly. "Kids," he cautions, "pay attention to your screen. If they put up an emergency light, you have to be there."

For two hours, the group of 14- to 19-year-old students—with a collection of ailments that includes autism, cerebral palsy, Tourette's syndrome, severe visual and learning impairments, Down's syndrome, and leukemia—sweat through a simulated shuttle launch.

The mission scientists conduct experiments designed to measure how sound travels in space and how different elements react to zero gravity. Three mission specialists don life support systems and leave the shuttle to repair a broken satellite. The public affairs officer handles communications and reads a note from the President.

Space Camp counselors encourage, instruct, and measure the students' work on detailed report cards.

"Bring the nose down, bring it down, a little more ... more. We have a touch down." Twenty students, two teachers, and two teachers' aides breathe again, then start cheering.

The students' score: 96 out of 100.

On graduation day, Scott Goudy, an 18-year-old with severe dyslexia, was called forward to receive the Outstanding Trainee, or "Right Stuff," award. Goudy, who reads at a fourth-grade level, was the only camper that week to achieve a perfect score on a space mission task. "Some people don't like special people," he said, "so I didn't think I was going to win. But I just tried my hardest, and I did it. And—I liked it."

"Most people think these kids can't handle technical subjects," Kersjes says. "But we know they can do just about anything. They just need to learn it in a different way."

Two years ago, when asked whether Space Camp would accept learning disabled students, Camp officials made the mistake of telling Kersjes and McKinney *no*. In response, the two Forest Hills Northern High School teachers set out to write a new chapter of *Getting to Yes*.

"Special education students just don't get the resources or the respect other students get," McKinney says. "And they constantly have to prove themselves. They deserve better, and we felt they might be treated better if people saw what they could do."

So the two teachers met with, lobbied, and submitted a proposal to Space Camp officials—who, like others pestered by McKinney and Kersjes, finally relented. But that was just the beginning. Then came the year-long task of preparing the students for the journey.

Eric Schultz

Mike Kersjes

The teachers got the backing of former astronaut and Michigan resident Jack Lousma, sought help from their Congressional Representative, and met with NASA's education director. With donated equipment and expertise, and with untold hours of volunteer time, they taught their students the acronyms, the principles, and the skills they would need to succeed.

To finance the project, McKinney and Kersjes enlisted the help of a local Burger King franchise owner, who donated $60,000—no strings attached. Last May, the group went to Camp.

Mike Schmidt, sporting a video camera and a constant smile, is very proud of his son, Ben, now a Space Camp graduate. Fifteen years ago, when Ben was born with Down's syndrome, doctors told the Schmidts to institutionalize him and forget him. They refused.

"For years, we've sold these kids short," Schmidt says. "The limits we've imposed on them in the past have been artificial. The key is giving them legitimate opportunities to see what they can do. The more opportunities they get, the more they prove themselves.

"I hope this week at Space Camp serves as a lesson plan about how much these students can achieve," Schmidt adds. "They're shattering some of the stereotypes out there, and I'm loving it."

—Stefanie Weiss

Eric Schultz

Space Camp "astronauts" experience weightlessness in the "Moon Walker."

For More Information

- *Space Camp* offers programs for students grades 4 and up and for teachers. Cost is about $500 per week; scholarships based on need, achievement, or ethnic background are available. Write to The Space and Rocket Center, One Tranquility Base, Huntsville, AL 35807-0680, or call 1-800-63SPACE.
- *NASA Teacher Resource Centers* provide a variety of teaching materials on space. To find the regional center nearest you, contact Anne Ayers, NASA Headquarters, Code XEE, Washington, DC 20546, 202-453-8386.
- *Space Is Special* is what McKinney and Kersjes call the nonprofit foundation they've established to develop and pilot science education materials for special education students all over the country. Write to 2635 Johnathan N.E., Grand Rapids, MI 49505.

TECH TALK

Teaming Up for Classroom Change

To some people, high technology may seem cold, mechanical, and—in education—far removed from real classroom applications. But many NEA members see technology as a tool that can enrich education immeasurably—serving, for instance, as a bridge to greater understanding between cultures or to greater opportunities for all students.

Some specifics: In Deer River, Minn., a team of teachers is using technology—interactive video-disk technology—to meet the needs of a diverse student body.

Bob Turner

Deer River, Minn., teachers (left to right) Myrna Peterson, Janet Kocak, Yvonne Wilson, Dennis Peterson

The Deer River group is one of five teams selected for the 1989 Christa McAuliffe Fellows program, a project of the NEA-based National Foundation for the Improvement of Education (NFIE).

Deer River's team is made up of K-6 computer education teacher Myrna Peterson, high school art teacher Dennis Peterson, first-grade teacher Yvonne Wilson, and second-grade teacher Janet A. Kocak. Together, they're creating a video disk about the history, art, and culture of the Ojibwa Indians. The disk will fill an immediate practical need: 30 percent of the district's students are Ojibwa, and written resources about the Objibwa are scant.

"Many of my peers have learned the Ojibwa language," says Yvonne Wilson, herself an Ojibwa, "but they know little about our culture.

The team is designing the interactive video disk to be a means of building understanding between the Native American and white communities. Using the disk and a computer, students will be able to access parts of a video featuring local Ojibwa artisans and describing the history of Ojibwa art and culture.

In Bell, Calif., just outside Los Angeles, the high tech road leads high school students to better jobs. Teachers Bonnie Weddle and Michael Goldberg are not only helping Bell High School students gain expertise in computer publishing and production, they're getting them jobs in the printing and publishing industry.

Weddle and Goldberg created Bell's Electronic Publishing and Instruction Center (EPIC) to give students a jump on today's printing technology.

"We wanted to give our students real work experience while they learned," says Weddle. In getting that experience, the Center's students have produced more than 6,000 documents, from flyers to lesson plans.

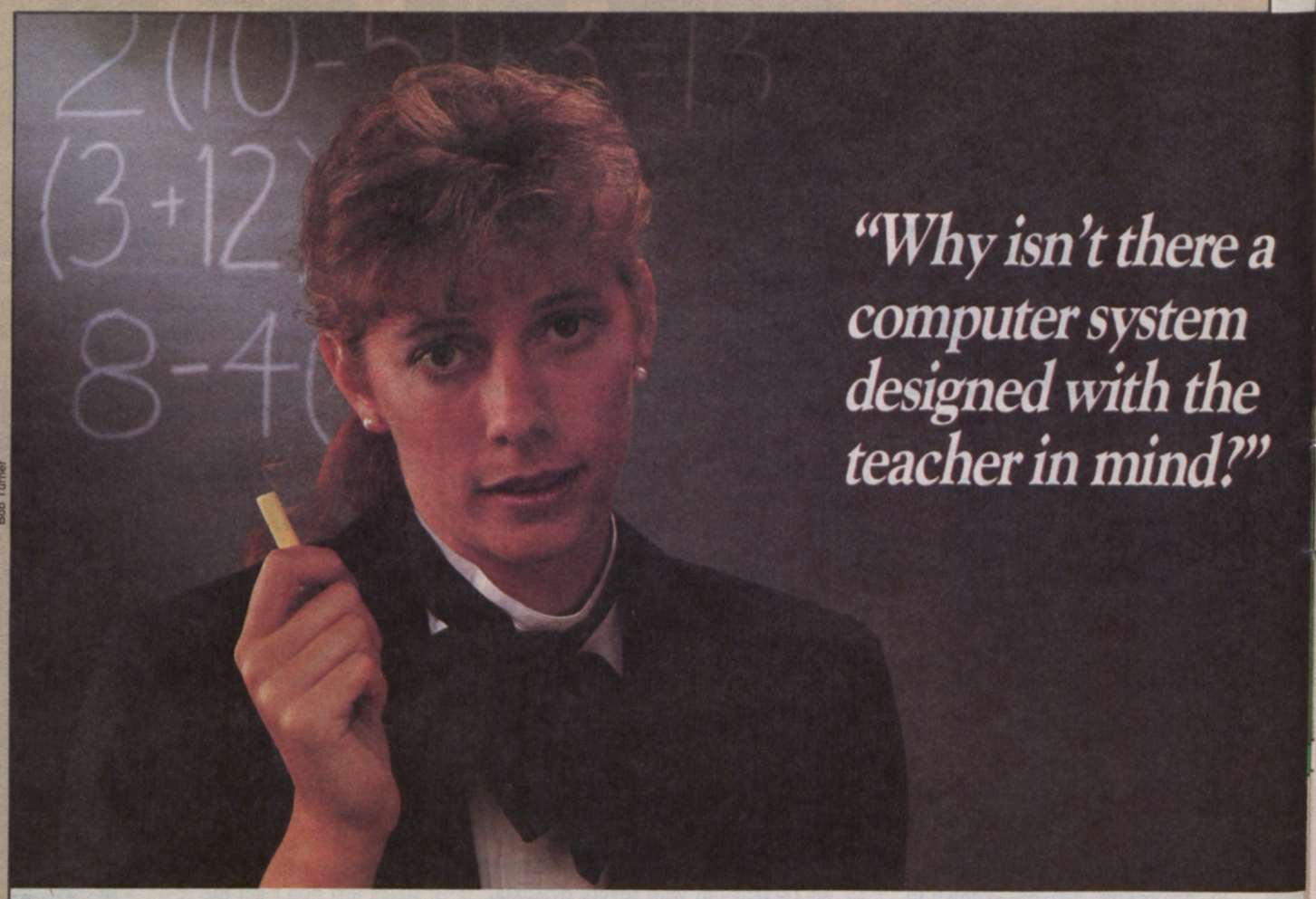
"The lesson plans are highly popular with our teachers," Weddle reports.

Bob Turner

"Weddleberg" partners Bonnie Weddle and Mike Goldberg

"They can't stop praising the beautiful work our students do—and you can imagine what a boost that is to the kids' self-esteem."

Weddle and Goldberg—like the teachers of Deer River—refuse to limit the reach of their project. "While today's technology gives us a chance to teach in new and exciting ways, it also provides us new avenues for our own learning," says Weddle. "That's its real gift to education." *—Anita Merina*



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Classroom Reflections

By Sharan Gibson

These people are driving me a little crazy. Maybe it's the age difference. They are 17, 18, some even 19, and I'm a few years older than most of their mothers.

There are other differences, too. They're remedial students, slow learners, deliberate or unconscious underachievers, or newcomers to the English language. I once failed a semester of algebra, but I won a little gold charm for being the best student in senior English. Now I'm teaching English. They're my first period class.

All of these students hate to read, and I read compulsively. Some of them have never finished a book before, while I read one or two a week. They look at me, unbelieving, when I tell them that.

By spring, we're all getting pretty tired of school and of each other. Still, we get together for an hour each day. And we talk.

Tammy listens to me. I stop on the word *martyrdom* and tell the class about the death of Cato the Younger, who botched the job of disemboweling himself because he'd hurt his hand earlier in the day smacking a smart-mouthed servant. When his doctor tried to push everything inside and stitch him back together, Cato shoved the man aside and finished ripping his own guts out.

For a few minutes I hold the class spellbound and silent, as I recall for them the death of this noble Roman from Plutarch's *Lives*. They want more, but that's all there is to tell them. Cato died a glorious suicide, and everyone respected him for it. Someone mutters an admiring "gross," and we return to our vocabulary lesson with all its sneaky antonyms. I'd be happy if they just remembered synonyms.

Tammy brings her workbook to my desk to ask me a question. After we fix up her wrong answers, she smiles at me. "You must have to listen real hard in college, don't you?" she wonders. I smile back.

I like this girl, with her loud voice, her hopelessly straight bleached hair, and the gob of mascara on each eyelid. I wish her well. I give a dirty look to two boys who laugh when, three days into watching *My Fair Lady*, Tammy turns to me and asks, "Would you call this a musical?"

But I don't like Cherry, and I feel bad that I don't. "Somebody ought to smack her upside the face!" she screams at Eliza Doolittle. Her voice can be heard by the teacher next door through a wall firm enough to have withstood a decade's worth of stapled posters. Anorexic Cherry doesn't like the wraith of a flower girl who smarts back at people.

Sitting at my desk in the darkness, I hide my face in my hands and try not to listen to her complaints. Irony doesn't reach Cherry. I can't explain to a girl who screams at people why a girl in a play screams at people.

Cherry's boyfriend sends her $80 worth of roses on Valentine's Day. And he beats her up so bad some weekends when he's home from college that she can't sit straight in her chair on Monday. But he bought her a diamond engagement ring worth ten times the one I received. I hate this boyfriend, and I've never even met him.

Another day the class and I watch *Night and Fog*, a documentary on Nazi Germany. We see skeletal men and women, piles of eyeglasses, and a mountain of human hair. We see guards carry baskets of severed human heads to a dumping hole. I have to look away.

Cherry puts her head on her desk and goes to sleep. These pictures don't have anything to do with her.

Luis sleeps most of the time, even when he wants to stay awake. His black glistening pompadour falls forward, and I can see a tail of tapered hair he hides down his shirt so the principal won't bust him for it. Muscles acquired at a local gym ripple under the skin of his arms when he wakes up.

Luis sleeps so much because he works as supervisor of a crew of cleaning women each night. He doesn't get home until 1 a.m., and first-period class starts at 7:40.

Kim came from Korea, bringing with her a ready smile and a Korean-English dictionary. Her writing sparkles with words she thinks she hears. Kim *nose* she must work hard. She reads the watered-down Canterbury Tails in which people die of bluebonnet plague and the Beowulf story about the warrior who can hold his breathings for a hole day to get to the watercave. She tries harder to read and patiently looks for the words in her dictionary.

At the end of an hour, she brings her unfinished work to me, bows, and asks with a brilliant smile, "I take home and finish, yes?" Sure.

Michael's father was run over by a concrete truck. It happened at the beginning of the school year. He was working at a construction site, and, as he knelt down to hand a pipe to another man, the truck took a route different from the one it should have taken and ran over both his legs.

I learned about it from the principal on the day after it happened, and Cherry filled in the details later. Her dad—or maybe it was her stepdad—was there, and he had seen the accident. I didn't really want to know what it sounded like when Michael's father screamed, or what it looked like when one leg was severed immediately and shot across the construction site. But Cherry told me.

Michael plays basketball, and we talk about sports. He asks whether I saw the Rockets' game last night. No, I was reading a book.

There are 16 of them when everybody comes on the same day. That doesn't sound like a very big class, unless you've ever tried to perform 16 tasks at the same time. There's never enough of me to go around, even on a slow day.

Kim asks me to help her with a question, and Adolpho, Luis, and Isabel start to discuss their weekends in rapid-fire Spanish. Felix explains a dirty joke to Mark, but Ronald isn't interested and continues to work on a detail in his Great American Chevy sketch. Kenneth has finished his work already and needs a pass to his locker to get his geometry homework. Lannie is lecturing Tammy on the need to visit her dying grandfather in Memorial City Hospital before it's too late.

Bobby slides out of his chair when I'm not looking and does his work on the tired orange carpet. Tammy comes to me in tears, asking for a pass to the rest room and a handful of my tissues. John pushes Cherry's purse onto the floor because they've been best friends since the second grade, and she screams at him. Then I lose my temper for a few minutes, until I remember that it doesn't make any difference. Mark smiles at the air in front of him. And it starts all over again.

I know it isn't the *people* who are driving me crazy but the *circumstances* that have brought them to me. Yet I can't untangle the web of stepfathers and stepmothers, can't activate brain cells that may not be there to begin with, can't erase years spent passively lying in front of a blaring television, can't inject 1,000 new words into their vocabularies, can't convince them that there is more to success than making a wad of money (since I've never done that myself), and I certainly can't convince them that there is something called "the life of the mind." It sounds so silly. It all makes me crazier.

And over our conversations, what do they tell me? Well, there's violence in their lives—far more than ever visits my chirpy accelerated students who come into the same room in the next hour and far more than I've known. When I was a senior, none of my friends' parents were divorced, but almost all of these students are from split families. Most drink far more alcohol in a weekend than my system could tolerate. Some use drugs. (Luis confides that a butter knife is ideal for cutting cocaine, but I hope he is kidding me again.)

Few of them are physically attractive, but they almost purr when I pay them a compliment or give them a smile. Not one of them sees anything wrong with copying someone else's work, and they're offended when I suggest that they do their own homework. Work is work. What's your problem, Mrs. Gibson?

My problem is that I can do so little to solve their problems. So we keep talking.

Sharan Gibson teaches English at Northbrook High School in the Spring Branch (Tex.) Independent School District. She is a doctoral candidate in creative writing at the University of Houston.

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COMING ATTRACTIONS

The Great Wall of IRON

What makes China's army tick? Complex answers to this simple, vital question are an unusual component of NEA's 1989-90 media campaign—and a valuable teaching aid.

The Great Wall of Iron, ***a five-part series sponsored by NEA as part of the Association's 1989-90 annual media campaign, will air on the Discovery Channel on the five Sundays in October from 10-11 p.m. ET and rebroadcast throughout October and November.***

Synopsis:

October 1: "The Blood-Red Flag." This opening episode provides background for understanding the People's Liberation Army.

October 8: "The People's Army." The second episode takes us back to the beginnings of the PLA as the Red Army and to its first battles: repelling the invading Japanese, waging civil war against the Nationalists, eventually conquering all China. This episode also presents later wars and upheavals in China's history, bringing us to the recent demonstrations in Tiananmen Square.

October 15: "The Middle Ages with Missiles." This third episode explores the great paradox of modern China and of the PLA: you can train to be an astronaut while living in a house without running water.

October 22: "Better Expert than Red." The fourth episode reveals a conflict within the PLA. Only young men with training can make it a modern fighting force, but old generals hold all the power. A visit with a young officer-trainee and his peasant mother and factory-worker father illustrates the changes taking place in the PLA and in China.

October 29: "The Making of *The Great Wall of Iron*." This final episode documents what happened when two Australian video crews worked for seven months in China to create this series—the friendships, conflicts, and frustrations that arose while the crews lived among the Chinese military.

Age level: high school

Subject areas: history, social studies, geography, government, current events, values clarification, ethics, language arts, music appreciation, art history and appreciation.

Objectives:

► to increase understanding of a developing world power and its contributions to world culture

► to improve relations among people of different nations through understanding

► to increase awareness of the similarities and differences among nations, resulting in a better appreciation of our own country and respect for others.

Questions and Activities:

► Social studies, history, geography: Where did the title come from? What is the Great Wall of China? Compare and contrast the two "walls."

► Social studies, values: The PLA is an "army of peasants": 80 percent of the Chinese people live in rural or outlying national minority areas. Discuss the benefits and drawbacks of having armed forces composed primarily of young people from rural backgrounds. How might this factor relate to the Chinese people's acceptance of the PLA?

► Social studies: Compare and contrast the PLA and our armed forces: their histories, who joins and why, the training they offer, who become the leaders, who their heroes are. The PLA is much larger than our armed forces, so why isn't China militarily stronger than the United States? Why should the world consider China a developing world power?

► Social studies, history, geography, current events, values: In Episode One, different individuals (a missionary, a PLA veteran) describe their experiences with the early PLA. How did the "Long March" benefit or hurt the early PLA? Who benefited by the eventual victory of the PLA? Who did not?

Also in Episode One, PLA soldiers describe their country's military conflict with Vietnam as "defensive action." Evaluate their statements. How and why might Vietnamese descriptions of the same war differ?

► Social studies, current events, values: Recently the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that a person could burn the United States flag in protest as part of a constitutional right to freedom of expression.

How might the Chinese people in general and the Chinese authorities in particular deal with a protester who destroyed a Chinese flag? Discuss freedom of expression, assembly, and protest in our country and in China.

► Values, language arts: Calligraphy is the art of artistic writing. Most written languages (our own, for example) are phonetic: a symbol stands for a sound. The Chinese write in ideographs: symbols stand for ideas. A Chinese person needs to know thousands of characters just to read a newspaper.

How are literacy and calligraphy linked in Chinese culture? Discuss the benefits and drawbacks of such a link. How might differences in language and writing systems affect communication between China and our country, or any other country?

Contact the U.S.-China Friendship Association (see "Bibliography") to obtain the names and addresses of high school students in China with whom to correspond. What else can people do to improve communication between our countries, and in the world?

► Social studies, values: In Episode Two, PLA spokespersons talk about the "peaceful liberation" of Tibet, while we see scenes of Tibetan monks being massacred. Research and compare the treatment of minority groups in China and in our country.

► Social studies, values: In Episode One a woman explains how and why the PLA abolished rank, uniforms, and insignia. Episode Four shows us how and why rank, uniforms, and insignia have recently been reinstated. Discuss the pros and cons of making everyone in a society or group "equal." How does a person gain power or recognition if individual achievement is devalued or even punished, as in the Cultural Revolution? How do our armed forces value "team effort" and "collective responsibility" in comparison to individual initiative?

This guide was written by Nancy Karkowsky, with additional material provided by Frank Holober, China specialist and former consultant on China for the World Bank, and produced for NEA by KIDSNET, the computerized clearinghouse for children's television and radio, Washington, D.C.

Bibliography:

The Heart of the Dragon. Documentary video series: 12 episodes of 57 minutes each, 1988; distributed by Ambrose Publications, 381 Park Ave. S., Suite 1601, New York, NY 10016, (212) 696-4545.

China in the Classroom: Resource Guide for Teachers, K-12. U.S.-China People's Friendship Association, 2025 I St., N.W., Suite 714, Washington, DC 20006

Resources:

Office of Chinese and Mongolian Affairs
U.S. Department of State
Washington, DC 20520
(202) 647-9141

Embassy of the People's Republic of China
2300 Connecticut Ave., N.W.
Washington, DC 20008
(202) 328-2520

National Association for Foreign Student Affairs, Special Projects
1860 19th St., N.W.
Washington, DC 20009
(202) 462-4811

National Committee on US-China Relations
777 United Nations Plaza, Room 9B
New York, NY 10017
(212) 922-1385

Consulates and trade or cultural exchange associations also exist in other major U.S. cities.

Meet:

a teen's eye view

***Sassy** magazine burst onto the publishing scene in 1988, mixing style and substance in Day-Glo colors and words that echo in local malls and school halls. Frank articles about everything from sex to Northern Ireland, celebrity trend tracking, and health tips, combined with bold graphics and a breezy writing style, have made* Sassy *a household word to half a million American teenagers.*

This fall, Anita Merina of NEA Today *visited 26-year-old* Sassy *Editor Jane Pratt in her New York office.*

What makes *Sassy* so different from other teen magazines?
Well, for one thing, it's very bright and flashy, very much like MTV. It's also written in the way teens speak to each other. We've gotten letters from readers saying *Sassy*'s just like the notes they pass in class—I don't know if I should say this to teachers! We speak their language, so we get them to read about subjects that they might not read about otherwise—things like AIDS and racism.

How do you keep current with what teens are doing?
Whenever I'm travelling I always go to the local mall. I move around and listen to what teenagers are talking about and watch what they buy and wear.

We also have a panel of 150 teenage girls who examine the magazine and tell us what they like and don't like.

***Sassy* looks at trends in teen culture. Are there any dangerous trends?**
The one thing that scares me to death is AIDS. Teenagers have always felt they're immortal, and it's very hard to convince them they're not. I keep hearing that in 5 to 10 years AIDS is going to be the biggest killer of teens, and that's really scary.

We've tried to drive the point home with stories like "My Best Friend Has AIDS," to show them this happens to other teenagers just like them.

Teenagers spent $55 billion last year. How do you account for this?
I've heard that teenagers have more money now than they've ever had to spend, and there are a couple of reasons for this. One is that there are so many broken homes. Parents who aren't there every day give children money instead of time. The other reason is that there are a lot of households where both parents work, and the kids are often left alone to do the shopping.

We have a column called "We Try It," and we're very honest about whether we like a product and think it's worth getting. We try to temper this *buy, buy, buy* mode with some good sense.

How do your readers respond to the magazine?
Our readers are very responsive—we get 10,000 letters a month. Sometimes those that disagree with us mean as much to me as those that agree, because they show we've gotten readers thinking about an issue.

How do parents react to your magazine?
Parents have said, "I've never talked to my daughter about guys or birth control, but the other day she brought an issue of *Sassy* to me and said, 'I want to talk about this article.'" I think *Sassy* can be a great mediator between teenagers and their parents.

On the other hand, we have received negative letters from parents who feel we're too frank with our readers. One of them started a boycott of our advertisers during the first months we were publishing.

How did the boycott start?
A mother in Indiana was upset because we gave teenagers information about birth control without saying that they shouldn't have sex before marriage and because we ran an article about homosexual teenagers and didn't say that homosexuality was absolutely wrong. She also didn't like an article about how boys develop. She and organizations like the Moral Majority began a letter-writing campaign to our advertisers.

How did this affect you?
Our five biggest advertisers canceled their advertising with us. That was devastating, particularly for a new magazine. But we came through it because so many teenagers loved our magazine and stayed with us. Now, most of those advertisers are back.

What should students look forward to in future issues?
Since I've been with *Sassy*, I've been increasingly impressed with teenagers' interest in global issues, and I think we'll cover more political, environmental, and social issues because of this. We also plan to include more material written by our readers.

Tell me about your own background.
Growing up (in Durham, North Carolina), I loved to read and I really wanted to work on a magazine. While I was in college, I interned at *Rolling Stone* magazine, and when I graduated I returned to New York to work on *McCall's*. From *McCall's* I went to *Teenage Magazine*, and from there I went to *Sassy*. I feel very lucky because I'm doing what I love and having a great time, too.

Sassy
Pop quiz: Are you boy-repellent?
Stuck in traffic with Paula Abdul
4 models who aren't perfect
Our Christina becomes a soap star
COSMIC
Teenagers living with war in Belfast

People

Famous Times, Famous People

Want to know specifics about *Miranda v. Arizona*? How about Sacco and Vanzetti or the Rosenberg spy trial? No need to visit a law library. Just ask former students of **Donna Glenn** and **Tim Tuttle** from Norco (Calif.) Middle School.

In each of the past three years, one of the above landmark cases was the subject of an eight-week in-depth study by Glenn's and Tuttle's honors history and English students. First the kids became researchers, reading old newspaper accounts, writing to bar associations and courts, and interviewing any witnesses still alive. Then they wrote, directed, and presented a play based on their findings and mounted a complementary exhibit.

For each production and exhibit the students created period costumes, sets, props, and architectural designs; radio news reports and front-page newspaper stories about the trial's issues and public reaction; and a report on the later decisions based on the case.

"These are massive projects," notes Glenn (pictured above with Tuttle and students from last spring's Rosenberg spy trial production). "The students get so involved that they become one with the subject as they sharpen their writing, speaking, listening, and thinking skills."

Glenn and Tuttle now teach—and offer the law project—at Centennial High in Corona, Calif.

A School Finds Its Roots

Bob Pennell

The 235 students at Briscoe Elementary in Ashland, Oregon, wanted to create a new image for their school—one that would reflect its gentleness, caring, and growth. First step was to replace the school's mascot—a mean, tough panther—with something more appropriate. But what?

Third and fifth grade teachers **Adrienne Adams** (left) and **Michelle Stewart** (right) came up with the winning suggestion—the giant century-old cypress (above) that stands just outside the school. The tree is the first thing people see driving south into this town just north of the California border.

"The next step was to create a logo," explains Adams. "Student reps from each of the K-8 classes met and discussed ideas. They decided on a motto—'Roots to the Future'—and then worked with our 'artist-in-the-school' to create several possible logos."

The version they chose now adorns school stationery, newsletters, and T-shirts like those worn by these Briscoe students.

She's Back in The Saddle Again

Despite bad weather and bad luck, Claudia von Ostwallen is determined to break a world record—and speak out for quality public schools. On June 9 the Warren (Ohio) special needs reading teacher set out from Virginia Beach, Va., on her thoroughbred, Max. Goal: to break the world record for travelling across the U.S. on horseback. Destination: Bandon, Oregon, 3,900 miles away. Along the way Von Ostwallen spoke to reporters about the funding needs of public education.

Count Hunger Out

Robert Chase

For Ken Leche, a night custodian at Kellogg Community College in Battle Creek, Mich., hunger is a very personal issue.

"I remember unemployment in my family. I remember public assistance," he says quietly. When the Food Bank of South Central Michigan came to the Association for help four years ago, Leche was ready to pitch in. The bank serves soup kitchens and other community groups that feed 38,000 hungry people. It needed help collecting cans of tuna fish, a food bank staple.

Working nights, Leche used his days to organize the "Tuna and a Buck" campaign, appealing to Association members in one school district to donate a can of tuna and a dollar. In 1989, more than 3,000 members in over 50 local Associations—and their students—participated in the annual drive, raising thousands of dollars and donating four tons of tuna.

Leche's goal: a nationwide Association drive raising 100 tons of tuna. As he says often, "Count us in to count hunger out."

Choo H. Ng

By July 3, von Ostwallen and Max had reached West Virginia. Then it happened: a coal truck sideswiped them, puncturing Max's leg and injuring von Ostwallen's left calf. Max needed 15 stitches, but although von Ostwallen was badly shaken up, she set out again a week later on a back-up mount, Sport.

The delay doomed any attempt to finish the ride over the summer. Von Ostwallen got only as far as Iowa before it was time to head back to Warren Reserve High School. But her record-setting mission isn't over.

"Next summer I plan to ride from Bandon to where I left off in Iowa to complete the trip in 87 days," says von Ostwallen. "The record is 10 months, and I still have a chance to beat it." And Max? Fully recovered, he's ready to start out again, too.

Saving the Animals

Joe Midzalkowski

Concern for animals has turned Lakeland, Fla., teacher Lauren Farinas and her sixth grade class into adoptive parents for lost, injured, and abandoned wildlife. Farinas' "Adopt an Animal" project has excited her students and provided them with lessons in how animals migrate—and how they live and die in today's environment.

Farinas, a member of the Polk Education Association, has guided her class in tagging and tracking skunks, a panther, a humpbacked whale, a variety of hawks, and a manatee. The adoptees are in the actual care of the local Fish, Wildlife and Parks Department and the local Audubon Society.

Last year two hawks that had been shot were found and treated. The birds lived, and Farinas' students adopted them. Eventually they were rehabilitated and set free.

The students raise money to help feed and shelter birds and animals that otherwise might not survive. Many of the adoptees receive radio collars, so the class can chart their whereabouts and keep track of how they're doing. "The kids are enthusiastic and moved by animals in need," says Farinas. 'They're curious, but they're also sincerely concerned and caring. They appreciate living things."

Same Fire, Next Time

Dennis Dunleavy

Last spring, when fire broke out in an art room at San Antonio's Horace Mann Middle School, head custodian **Ernest Garcia** was one of the staff who got there in time to contain the flames until the fire department came.

Later, Garcia was hospitalized briefly for smoke inhalation, but by afternoon he was released. He came back to school and made a final check of the fire scene—only to find he had to put the same fire out again.

"It's a good thing I took another look," says Garcia, a member of Educational Support Personnel of San Antonio and custodial caucus representative. "A ceiling beam was smoldering and about ready to burst into flames." Garcia picked up a fire extinguisher and zapped the flames. His final observation: "It wouldn't be a bad idea for custodians to have a little training in dealing with fire."

Charles Lewis

Evening the Odds

Donna Dahlquist's a preschool special education aide—apparently good experience for an organizer and negotiator. Dahlquist became both when consolidation of two far-flung vocational and special education districts in western New York brought the 1987 merger of two wall-to-wall support staff locals. Next came a hard-fought representation election. Dahlquist then took a lead in delicate contract negotiations, protecting the benefits of longtime NEA-NY members while bringing their new colleagues the same level of compensation. "No one was hurt," she notes. "Everyone got raises."

Today Dahlquist's president of a local with the mouth-filling name Unified Support Association of the Erie 2-Chautauqua-Cattaraugus BOCES (USA E2 CCB for "short"). Some 300 members spread over 1,800 square miles and 43 different jobs, including custodians, printers, and TV technicians.

In her free time, Dahlquist's pursuing a bachelor's degree in labor relations.

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(Home): (____) _____

SCHOOL: _____ DISTRICT: _____

Date current homeowner's policy expires: _____

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51 Monroe Street, Suite 200
Rockville, Maryland 20850-9965

INTERNATIONAL

Letting the Children Teach about Peace

What can children teach world leaders about peace? Plenty, say organizers of the fifth annual World Children's Day at the United Nations.

Last year students at Wyomissing Hills (Penn.) Elementary School created a patchwork quilt based on interviews in which World War II veterans spoke of the need for world peace.

Sequiota Elementary School students in Springfield, Mo., raised $500 to help buy playground equipment for the homeless children at a nearby hotel.

Both projects were entries in the World Children's Day Peace contest, open to elementary schools all over the world. Since 1986, more than 45,000 children from 120 countries celebrated WCD. Last year, the WCD contest selected one entry from each of the 50

Children of Ghana in their national costume gather before the U.N. building at last year's World Children's Day.

states, exhibiting the entries in the United Nations building on World Children's Day. On this day, children replaced the adult U.N. representatives and share their ideas, hopes, and visions for world peace.

This year, the contest theme is "We Will Shape the Future by Making a Difference Now." All schools celebrating World Children's Day (Sunday, April 22, 1990) with a community exhibition of student projects will be eligible to participate. Program organizers ask each school to select one project to represent the school and send a maximum of five slides by February 15 to illustrate the project, and a description by the children of the project (no more than 250 words). The description should be written in the following format:

► One of the issues affecting our community is:

► We helped solve it by:

► Through this act we learned that:

"Each project should address a problem in your community," says Filiz Odabas-Geldiay, executive director of the World Children's Day Foundation. "They can range from planting trees, to helping illiterate children, to helping the homeless. The school must illustrate the project in a quilt (80" x 80"), painting (20" x 24"), posters (30" x 40") or banner (120" x 25").

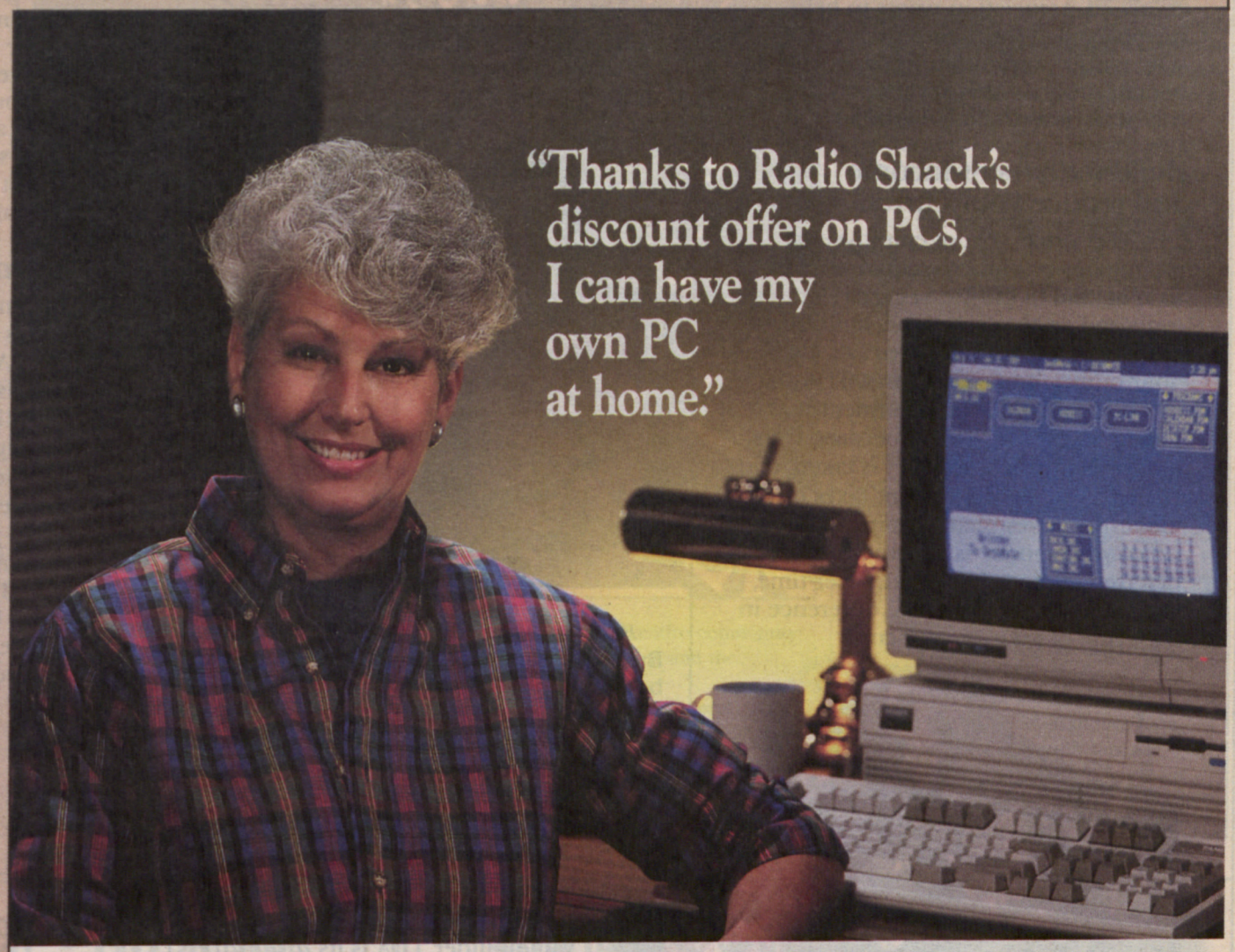
World Children's Day was initiated in 1986 by the United Nations in response to two young children in New York City who asked that the children of the world be given the chance to teach adults about world peace.

There is no entry fee for this program. However, WCDF requests a $25 donation to defray the expense of promoting the contest and follow-up activities. Send a stamped self-addressed envelope for names of the winners.

To enter the competition, provide the following information and mail by December 15 to: World Children's Day Foundation, 4401-A Connecticut Ave., N.W., Suite 287, Washington, DC 20008. (202) 966-7226

Name of school:
School district:
County:
Address:
Telephone:
Contact person (principal or teacher):
Enclosed is our voluntary contribution of: $

Note: The WCDF is not responsible for the return of any exhibits sent for display. All materials become property of the WCDF and as such will remain in the Foundation's possession. The Foundation has the exclusive right to exhibit and use the projects at other times.



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ValueBuilder provides *nine investment options,* so you can choose the type of investment strategy that suits you. You direct the allocation of your contributions among the various options. If your goals change, you can transfer funds among these options *at any time without charge.*

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YOU AND YOUR RETIREMENT

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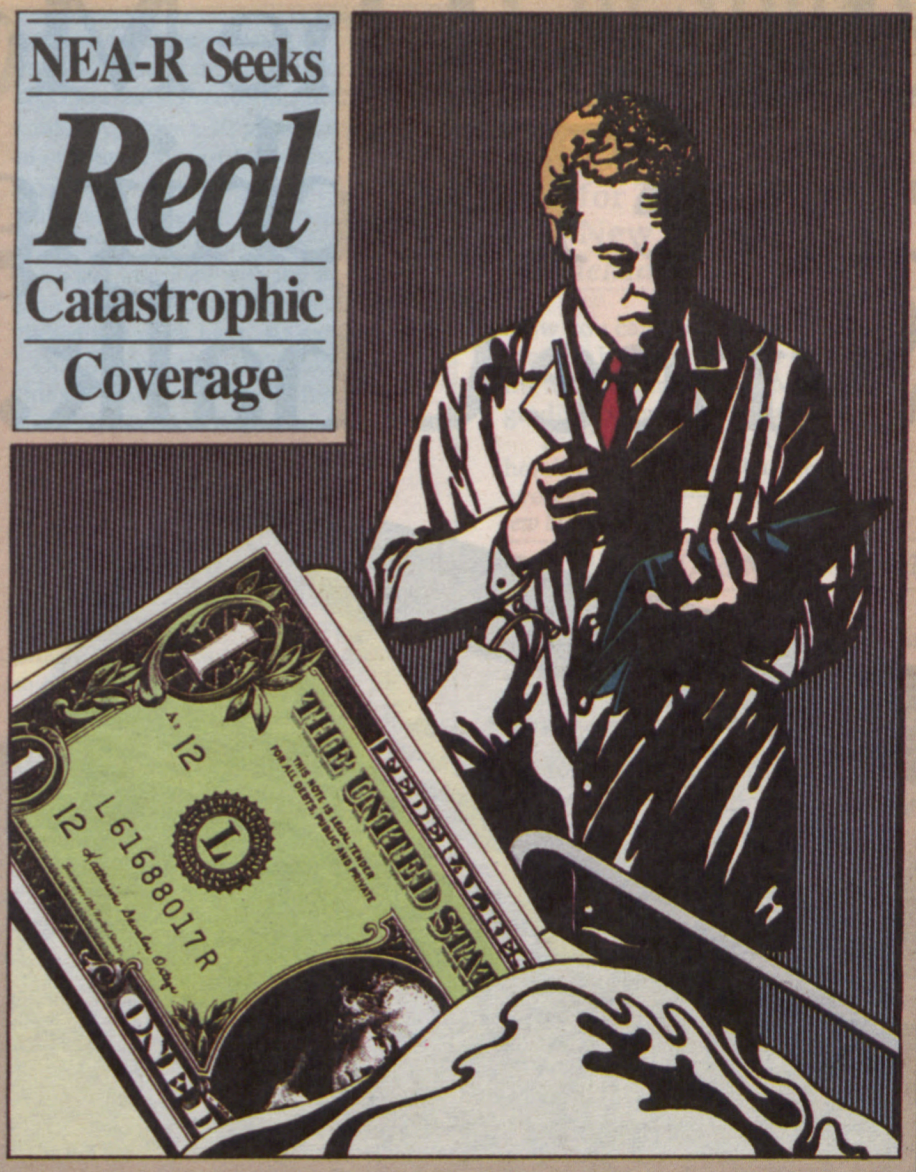

Most retired people are dissatisfied with the Medicare Catastrophic Coverage Act Congress enacted last year, and NEA-Retired members are no exception.

The law, widely publicized as landmark legislation, had one simple aim: to protect retirees from the financial catastrophe often brought on by major illnesses. The 1988 Act does offer significant new health care protections, but it has a serious flaw. Violating social insurance principles that have traditionally governed Social Security and Medicare, it places the entire burden of financing on the program's beneficiaries. The income tax surcharge it imposes on retirees will cost many of them as much as $800 on their next federal income tax return.

For this reason, NEA last year was one of the few national organizations to fight the proposed financing mechanisms of the catastrophic care bill before it became law.

Today, NEA lobbyists on Capitol Hill, backed by NEA-R grassroots members across the country, are actively battling to reduce the cost burden and to build a comprehensive health care package that will adequately serve the ill and elderly.

The NEA effort, joined in by other retiree organizations, has already forced members of Congress to sit up and take notice. In late July, the House Ways and Means Committee approved a major revision that would cut the surtax in half.

The House committee action would also allow Medicare beneficiaries to opt out of the catastrophic benefits program with its costly premiums—but only if they agree to give up their coverage under Part B, the portion of the Medicare program that reimburses doctors. And the committee action would add disproportionately to the burden on lower-income Medicare recipients by raising premiums $7.50 a month.

Should the Catastrophic Care law be repealed? NEA at this time says no. Instead, the Association is pushing for reforms that are generally fair and in keeping with the basic principle of social insurance: the entire community should share the burden and the benefits.

What NEA seeks is a federal catastrophic health care program with a broad-based financing mechanism accompanied by a sound long-term care program.

One of the most intriguing reforms now pending—a reform supported by NEA—would combine Medicare Parts A (covering hospital costs) and B (covering doctor's bills and the cost of prescription drugs). It would then add a new section to meet the urgent need for long-term care of the chronically ill.

This proposed program could be financed under a system that would slightly reduce the Old Age Survivors and Disability Insurance portion of the Social Security (FICA) tax, slightly increase the Hospital Insurance portion, and entirely remove the wage ceiling from the FICA tax for both employers and employees.

Because revenues might not cover the entire cost of the combined Part A–Part B–Long-Term Care Program, NEA believes that Congress should consider increasing the income surtax rate for high-income individuals.

For the long run, on the basis of many polls conducted in the past few years and of recent developments in health benefit negotiations, NEA believes that the American people would overwhelmingly support a national comprehensive health program.

NEA is urging the Senate Finance Committee to move ahead expeditiously to develop a full national health care insurance plan, including long-term care of the chronically ill.

—Diane Dismuke

Make Your Voice Heard!

You can write your Senators (U.S. Senate, Washington, DC 20510) and Representative (U.S. House of Representatives, Washington, DC 20515) urging social insurance funding of catastrophic health care and a sound, comprehensive national health insurance plan.

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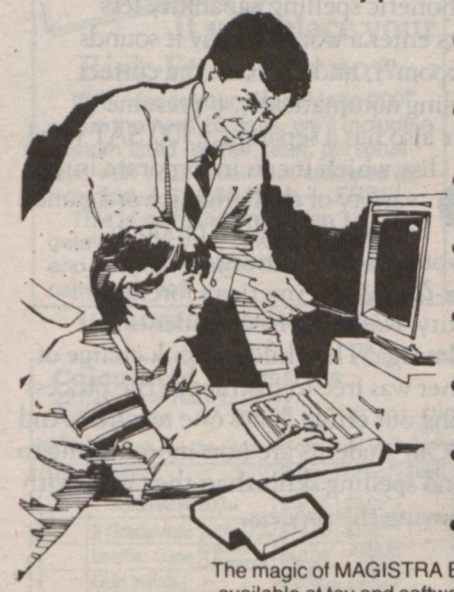

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Throughout years of changes in students, teachers and schools, one problem has remained a constant—creating enthusiasm for learning language skills. The Franklin Language Master™ electronic dictionary is succeeding in doing just that. In classrooms across the country, it's helping students improve their spelling, reading and writing. They're so popular, in some classrooms they're known as "Frankies."

The Language Master contains over 83,000 entry words, and at the touch of a button gives complete definitions and synonyms with electronic speed. Its phonetic spelling capability lets students enter a word the way it sounds ("prezoom"), and get back the correct spelling automatically, ("presume"). It also has a separate 3,300 SAT word list, which it can incorporate into a variety of challenging word games. As in all Franklin products, words and definitions are from *Merriam-Webster*,® America's foremost reference authority. Response from students and teachers has been overwhelming: "The children took charge of their learning and the teacher was free to instruct in the process of writing rather than picking out errors," says one teacher. And a school librarian reports, "Our students are now more willing to improve their vocabulary and spelling skills than they were with print resources, and are enjoying the process."

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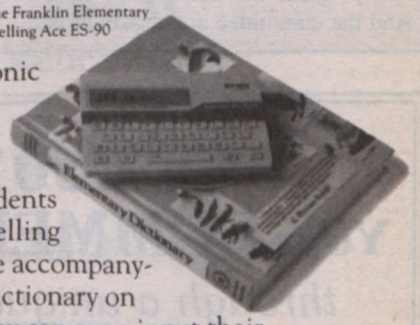

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Franklin electronic reference products are helping students of all levels improve their language skills. Schools across the country are finding them useful in programs from special to accelerated education. Best of all, they're priced more like books than computers. To find out more, call our Education Line toll-free at 1-800-525-9673, and ask for our free catalog.

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TRENDS

Dropping Back In

Dropping out means the end of college—right? Not at all, say University of Wisconsin demographers. Looking at the records of some 13,000 people interviewed in 1987 and 1988, they checked on those who'd left college without getting a degree and stayed out for at least six months. A third of the dropouts returned within three years of leaving, half returned within 15 years, and a fourth ended up with bachelors degrees.

Dropping out to get married didn't put an end to schooling, either. Half of those who married without finishing college returned later, about 80 percent of them as full-time students.

Education: A Team Game

Public schools are a lot more likely to team up with businesses or community groups than they were just a few years ago, says the National Center for Education Statistics.

Two out of five public elementary and secondary schools formed partnerships with other institutions during the 1987-88 school year, an NCES study estimated. Four years earlier, less than one school in five had an outside partner.

In 1988, according to the study, 30,800 public schools were involved in 140,800 partnership agreements.

Southeastern schools are more likely than others to have formed partnerships, the study showed, and so are large, urban schools with substantial percentages of students from low-income families.

Going for the Gold

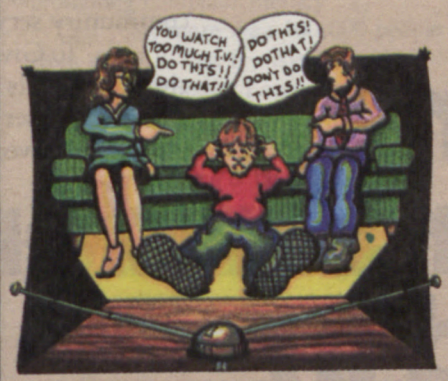
More and more school districts are using financial rewards to motivate students to work hard for good grades. To students in several hundred districts, for example, a high grade-point average means money saved. At cash registers throughout the community, those who meet the standard rake in the rewards—typically a 10 percent discount on merchandise, fast foods, and services.

The visible sign of success is often a "Gold Card" laminated with an I.D. photo and inscribed with the student's name and an encouraging slogan like "When you work hard, we care."

One newspaper calls the gold card "truly a credit card. Credit for learning and achievement, for excellence in education. A discount for what really counts: brain power."

Escape to Nowhere

Stressed-out kids in authoritarian families watch more TV than youngsters in more relaxed and supportive households, says a Bryn Mawr College researcher. To make it worse, these children often get hooked on just the kinds of programs that offer them the least help. Seeking escape, they switch on fantasy shows and violent programs—including cartoons. Boys, especially, choose programs that glorify loners.



TV could offer these children some emotional support or intellectual stimulation—but not through those shows. Better would be family shows (which might offer hints on coping with domestic conflicts), comedy programs (which at least would give them a chance to laugh), and educational programs (which might give them some new interests).

For Blacks: Decline Over Two Decades

Black Americans made some economic and social gains between 1940 and 1970, but since then they've stagnated or fallen back, according to a new report from a National Academy of Sciences committee.

A Common Destiny: Blacks and American Society notes that over 30 percent of Blacks lived below the poverty line in 1984—the same percentage as in 1969. Median Black family income fell slightly between 1985 and 1970, while family income for whites rose slightly.

Between 1969 and 1987, the proportion of Black youngsters living in poverty rose from 40 to 45 percent. And poverty, segregation, teenage parenthood, and joblessness among Blacks could worsen in coming years, warns the report.

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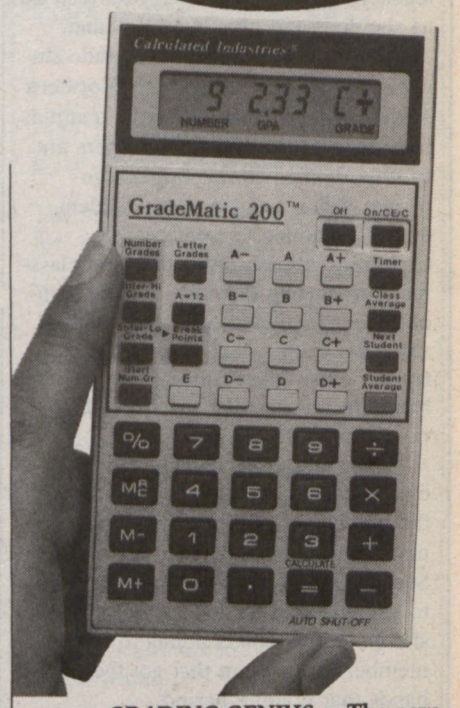
That's right. At last there's a handheld calculator that lets you average grades — *with the touch of a few buttons!*



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Could You Use More Time?

Whether you use letter grades, numerical scores, or a combination of both, you will save hours upon hours of time each marking period with the new GradeMatic 200.

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Plus, it handles up to 99 grades per student and up to 99 students per class — *automatically.*

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Unlike computer grading programs, the GradeMatic 200 lets you grade where you want and when you want. It measures a mere 2 3/4" x 5 1/4" x 1/4", so it fits easily in your purse or pocket.

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Best of all, the GradeMatic 200 comes complete with easy-to-follow instructions, 1-Year Warranty, replaceable batteries (avg. life over 2 yrs.), and sturdy vinyl carrying case.

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"I can't believe the time I save with this wonderful invention! It's so easy even my students can use it."
Gary Geivet, Santiago Elementary, Santa Ana, CA

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Sherrie D. Morritz, Grandview Jr. High, Phoenix, Arizona

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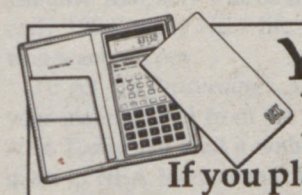
Virginia Mattingly, South Spencer High School, Rockport, Indiana



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IDEA EXCHANGE

Give Students a Hand

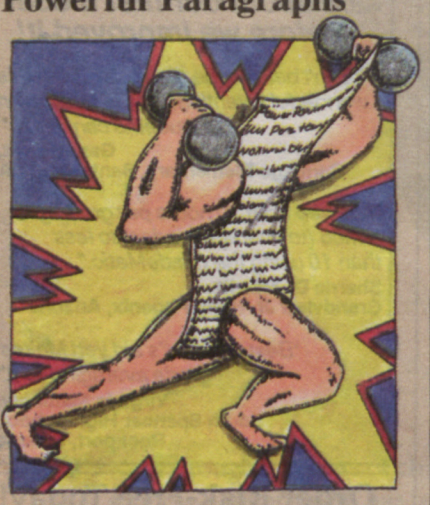
Looking for a different way to reward your students for good work and encourage them at the same time? Math teacher Bonnie Langan suggests you do as she does and give them a "hand."

Because Langan's seventh-grade students at Accident (Maryland) Northern Middle School work in teams, qualities like motivating and helping others are as important as completing assignments. When Langan sees a student doing something exemplary—like explaining a math procedure to a classmate or starting the daily review without being reminded—she gives that student's team a paper hand, traced from a glove insert. Printed on the hand are phrases like "Hooray, Hooray, You Were Great Today!"

At the end of each class, Langan counts each team's hands and records the number on a chart. Each week she marks the chart with Top Team and Second Fiddle ribbons. When it's time to calculate grades for the report cards, she gives five bonus points to each member of the team that got the most hands that grading period.

"Students do better when they know we're watching for positive behavior," says Langan.

Powerful Paragraphs



At Indiana (Pa.) Area High School, English teacher Gemma Gigliotti uses note cards to teach sophomores the concept of paragraph development.

Each student composes a paragraph, then writes each sentence on a separate note card, putting the topic sentence on a card that's a different color from the rest. Then, working in pairs, the students shuffle their cards and exchange them with their partners. Each partner organizes the paragraph by comparing supporting sentences with the topic sentence. The cards also make it easy for students to revise copy.

"Making the topic sentence stand out helps students remember that every other sentence should relate to it," says Gigliotti. "And the peer editing works well because someone else is pointing out weak spots in the writing."

Have a favorite classroom tip or project you'd like to share with readers of *NEA Today?* Jot it down, include a graphic if you'd like, and send it to Idea Exchange, *NEA Today*, 1201 16th St., N.W., Washington, DC 20036. Be sure to include your address and phone number.

The Bulls and the Bears

When Glendale, Mont., teacher Lewis Melby wants to teach his marketing and distributive education students about corporations, he piques their interest by involving them—on paper at least—with the stock market.

First, each of his Dawson County High School students writes to one or two corporations (the school librarian shows them how to find addresses), requesting annual reports. These in hand, they read the parts most easily understood (the report to the stockholders is a good place to start) and check the graphs showing company sales and growth.

The students report to their classmates on what products or services the companies provide, what subsidiaries they have, who's competing with them, and their sales records. Then each student chooses a corporation and "invests" $1,000, explaining why the investment's a good one. Many students follow "their" stocks all year, reports Melby.

Teachers: Are Your Students Involved in Community Service?

Then U.S.News and IBM Want to Profile You in a Special Sponsored Feature in U.S.News & World Report

IBM, in association with U.S.News & World Report, is sponsoring a nationwide program to promote teacher-directed student community service in grades K-12. It's called "To Give and Learn," a series profiling outstanding achievement in student community service.

"To Give and Learn" is designed to recognize those schools which have established active community service programs. If your students are already involved, then your school can be one of the six programs profiled in an IBM-sponsored feature appearing in U.S.News this fall.

To Give & Learn
Honoring Outstanding Student Community Service in America

What Teachers and Students Could Receive

Each of the six schools associated with the programs profiled will receive an IBM networked computer lab consisting of 20 PS/2® Model 25 computers, one PS/2 Model 60 file server, four IBM Proprinters™ and a library of IBM educational software.

How You Can Participate

If your students are involved in teacher-directed community service projects and you would like them to be considered for the "To Give and Learn" program, all you need to do is let us know. Call us at 1-800-999-6819 to receive an official application.

For an application, call: 1-800-999-6819

Completed applications must be postmarked no later than October 13, 1989.

Endorsed by the American Federation of Teachers and the National Education Association

U.S.News & World Report

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Your NEA

REACHING OUT

NEA Message Reaches 6 Million

DDA AND WORKING MOTHER TECHNOLOGY PRESENT
EDUCATION OF THE FUTURE
HAT IS THE NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION?
HE CHALLENGES AHEAD
GLOBAL AND FAR-REACHING

The September issues of *McCall's* and *Working Mother*, two magazines with a combined circulation of over 6 million, featured special "parenting" sections provided by NEA.

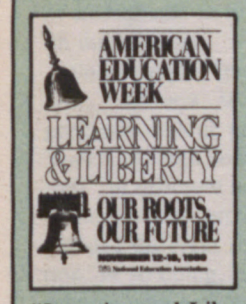
The Association's goal: to increase parents' willingness and ability to get involved with their children's educations.

The two-page *Working Mother* section offered NEA guidance for parents who want to become more involved in their children's education. Topics included computer literacy, teamwork, language arts, and critical thinking.

The 24-page *McCall's* version offered more in-depth information on these and other topics, plus political economist Robert B. Reich's description of the kind of education American children will need in the 21st century.

For free copies (while they last), write to NEA Communications, Attn: Parent Involvement, 1201 16th St., N.W., Washington DC 20036.

American Education Week Set for Nov. 12-18



The 68th annual observance of American Education Week is set for November 12-18. The NEA and the 11 other sponsoring organizations have selected "Learning and Liberty: Our Roots, Our Future" as the nationwide theme.

American Education Week encourages citizens in communities across America to reaffirm support for the work of their public schools. The Week has been an annual event since 1921 with NEA and the American Legion as the original sponsors.

On Wednesday, November 15—National Education Support Personnel Day—NEA affiliates and communities around the nation will honor school secretaries, paraprofessionals, maintenance workers, food service employees, bus drivers, and other support staff.

Computer Learning Month Brings New Contests, Prizes

October is Computer Learning Month. Sponsored by the Computer Learning Foundation, the month-long series of events, activities, and contests will help thousands of students and teachers learn new uses of computers and software. NEA is an honorary sponsor of the Foundation and supports its goal of promoting computer literacy.

Last year, more than 100,000 people from the U.S. and Canada submitted entries in Computer Learning Month contests. In addition, over 3,000 computer learning events were held by schools and community groups throughout North America.

This year, Computer Learning Month contests focus on using computers and software as tools in everyday activities, in regular classrooms, and in addressing education reform, literacy, and dropout prevention. A total of 49 grand prize winners will receive computer systems; 160 will receive software packages.

To obtain a free copy of the Computer Learning Month Official Publication and contest information, write to: Computer Learning Foundation, P.O. Box 60007, Palo Alto, CA 94306-0007.

NEA Publication Helps Teach About AIDS

The NEA Health Information Network has just published a new 28-page booklet, "Responding to HIV and AIDS," to help educators understand, teach about, and deal with Human Immunodeficiency Virus and Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome.

The booklet, now available free to NEA members, offers the latest information and answers common questions about how HIV is and is not spread, how to show care and compassion for people with AIDS, and even how to say goodbye to someone you love. It also provides a helpful list of additional information and teaching resources.

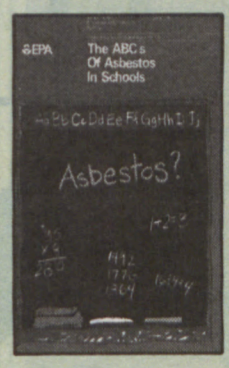
To get a copy, write to the NEA Health Information Network, 100 Colony Square, Suite 200, Atlanta, GA 30361, or call 404-875-8819.

NEA Videos Still Available

Videos on parent involvement in schools are the number one sales items in the NEA's Video Library. Other top sellers are: "Writing for Grants" and "Iacocca—Industry Looks At Education."

NEA makes videos available at cost, $15. Order forms can be obtained by writing to: Video Library Order Form, NEA Communications, 1201 16th St. N.W., Washington, DC 20036.

NEA, EPA, PTA Issue Asbestos Booklet



As part of a long-standing campaign to rid the nation's schools of asbestos, NEA has joined with the PTA and the Environmental Protection Agency to produce "The ABC's of Asbestos in Schools."

The 16-page booklet describes the health dangers that asbestos poses and offers guidelines to help parents and school employees identify and remedy asbestos problems. It also outlines the responsibilities of school boards and other school officials to protect students and employees from asbestos exposure.

For individual copies of the booklet or answers to questions about asbestos in schools, call EPA's asbestos ombudsman, 800-368-5888.

Life Members: Request Proceedings

The 1989 *Proceedings of the Representative Assembly* will be mailed in early 1990 to any NEA life member who wants a copy.

To get the *Proceedings*, simply clip your mailing label from the front of *NEA Today* and send it with your request to NEA Membership Records, 1201 16th St., N.W., Washington, DC 20036, no later than Dec. 8.

MAKING NEWS

NEA Supports March For Fair Housing

The NEA-backed National March for Affordable Housing will take place Oct. 7 in Washington, D.C.

September events leading up to the march included a national news conference featuring NEA President Keith Geiger as a major speaker. News conference participants released "Housing and Homelessness: A Teaching Guide" and a videotape on the topics.

The curriculum, with materials for grades 4-12, was written by educators and housing and homeless activists. The video, "Shelter Boy," was produced by Fox Broadcasting.

At least 10,000 children will be part of the march. Efforts are under way to have the young marchers deliver letters from children all over the country to the Capitol.

Those interested in working with a local organizing effort should call the "Housing Now" national office at 202-347-2405. For information on Association efforts, call Boyd Bosma in the NEA Human and Civil Rights office, 202-822-7730. For copies of the teaching guide and videotape, contact your state Association.

TAKING A STAND

Roll Call Vote

Under a policy set by the NEA Board of Directors in 1975, NEA must publish every roll call vote of the Board. At its May 5-6 meeting, the Board took a roll call vote to "allocate up to $134,500 from the Contingency Fund to assist the West Virginia Education Association."

The motion carried, with 136 members voting yes, 0 voting no, 4 nonrespondents, 2 members absent, and 4 members replaced by alternates. At the time of the vote, there was one vacancy on the Executive Committee.

The absentees were George K. Zachariah (DC) and Philip Rumore (NY). Those replaced by alternates were Denise R. Rockwell (CA), Elaine Lancaster (NV), Elaine Mollencopf (OH), and Rachel C. Wilson (VA).

RESEARCH CLUES

Are We Teaching What's Needed in Elementary Math?

By Robert McNergney and Martin Haberman

Why do U.S. students do worse on tests of problem solving and higher order thinking skills than students in other countries? To find out, researchers have been examining the effort we put into teaching math—in fact, into teaching different aspects of math.

In a recent two-part study, researchers analyzed daily logs kept by fourth- and fifth-grade teachers in Michigan. Asked to note which of a list of 288 topics they taught and how long they spent on them, the teachers reported spending about 75 percent of their time teaching skills—especially how to add, subtract, multiply, and divide. The remaining 25 percent of the time was equally divided between teaching conceptual understanding and teaching problem solving.

The teachers devoted on average more than 300 minutes per year to teaching computational skills. But while most spent at least some time on almost every one of the 288 topics, they didn't spend a significant amount of time on more than a handful. For example, two-thirds of the fourth-grade teachers spent less than an hour per year on story problems involving the multiplication of whole numbers.

Similarly, although computing decimals and fractions is a priority in fifth grade, two-thirds of the fifth-grade teachers spent less than an hour a year on problem solving with fractions, and half gave less than an hour to problem solving involving decimals.

Arithmetic textbooks allot space in much the same proportions as teachers allot time: 65-80 percent to skills practice; 1-24 percent to conceptual understanding; and 6-13 percent to problem solving. If teachers are to shift the emphasis of what they teach, different texts would clearly help.

The most dramatic research finding deals with what teachers call "teaching for exposure" rather than "for mastery." Over 70 percent of the 288 topics were taught only 30 minutes per year. Only 20 percent of the topics received more than a half hour, and less than 10 percent received two hours or more.

The reason teachers give for "exposure teaching" is that they believe they're introducing topics that will be covered again in future grades. As might be guessed, skills and computation were most frequently taught for mastery—over longer periods—while concepts, problem solving, and higher order thinking were taught for exposure—in single, short lessons.

Researchers believe that because topics that deal with thinking are more likely to be taught for exposure than for mastery, students may come to believe that conceptual understandings and applications are less important than speed and accuracy in computational skills. Teaching for exposure may also convince students that knowing a little about a lot is better than knowing a few key concepts in depth.

Total time devoted to math varied widely from class to class. Different teachers actually taught math anywhere from 139 to 178 days a year. The time spent on math varied from 35 to 65 minutes a day. Using a 50-minute daily lesson as a standard, this means that some fourth- and fifth-grade teachers teach math as much as 116 days (23 weeks) more than others. Researchers found that teachers apparently feel they have great flexibility in the amount of time they teach math and in the amount of time they devote to one topic as opposed to another.

This column is based on research reported in Andrew Porter, "A Curriculum Out of Balance: The Case of Elementary School Mathematics." *Educational Researcher*, June/July 1989, pp. 9-15. Porter is director of the Wisconsin Center for Educational Research, University of Wisconsin, 1025 W. Johnson Street, Madison, WI 53706.

Robert McNergney is a professor of educational studies and director of the Commonwealth Center for the Education of Teachers, University of Virginia and James Madison University, Charlottesville, VA 22903. Martin Haberman is a professor at the School of Education, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, Milwaukee, WI 53201. They prepared this column for NEA Today *with the cooperation of the American Educational Research Association.*

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We've been a student of yours for more than ten years now. By working closely with you, we at Apple Computer have gained many valuable insights into how to connect kids and teachers with computers in ways that motivate and inspire. We feel privileged to have such a relationship with teachers and look forward to many exciting collaborations ahead. It's been quite an education so far.

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BOOK BEAT

Fass

Kirp

Murray-Seegert

A Disproportionate Effect

Outside In: Minorities and the Transformation of American Education
By Paula Fass
Oxford University Press. 320 pp. $24.95.

Learning by Heart: AIDS and Schoolchildren in America's Communities
By David L. Kirp with others
Rutgers University Press. 304 pp. $22.95.

Nasty Girls, Thugs, and Humans Like Us: Social Relations Between Severely Disabled and Nondisabled Students in High School
By Carola Murray-Seegert
Paul H. Brookes. 198 pp. $22.

Study the impact of "outsiders"—immigrants, Blacks, women, Catholics—on American education, and insights will be your reward. That's because in American education, including the public schools, the influence of outsiders has been far greater than their numbers. This is the premise of *Outside In,* by Paula Fass, associate professor of history at the University of California, Berkeley.

The analysis of the interaction between immigrants and the public schools is Fass's central story. Half of it is well known: at the beginning of the century the public schools expanded their role in order to "socialize" the children of immigrants. Less well known is the other half of the story: the children of immigrants in turn had an impact on the schools.

For example, in the 1930s and '40s, Fass says, second- and third-generation ethnic groups in New York City high schools "specialized" in different academic and extracurricular programs as they pursued different routes to assimilation. In so doing, they created schools with an ethnic stamp—genuine American high schools, albeit different from the ideal the socializing reformers had in mind.

But specialization had a price: even though largely self-imposed by the various ethnic groups, it created inequalities in their exposure to what the schools had to offer.

Now two new groups of outsiders, the subjects of books by David Kirp and Carola Murray-Seegert, have appeared in the public schools: children with AIDS and the severely mentally retarded.

In *Learning by Heart,* David Kirp, another Berkeley professor (in this case, of public policy) shows how the need to react to children with AIDS forced not just schools but entire communities to declare themselves communities of compassion or communities of control.

Swansea, Mass., became a community of compassion when local leaders in education and medicine set in motion what Kirp calls a "transforming experience," a town meeting in which people could hear the evidence, overcome their fears—and ultimately decide to welcome the child with AIDS.

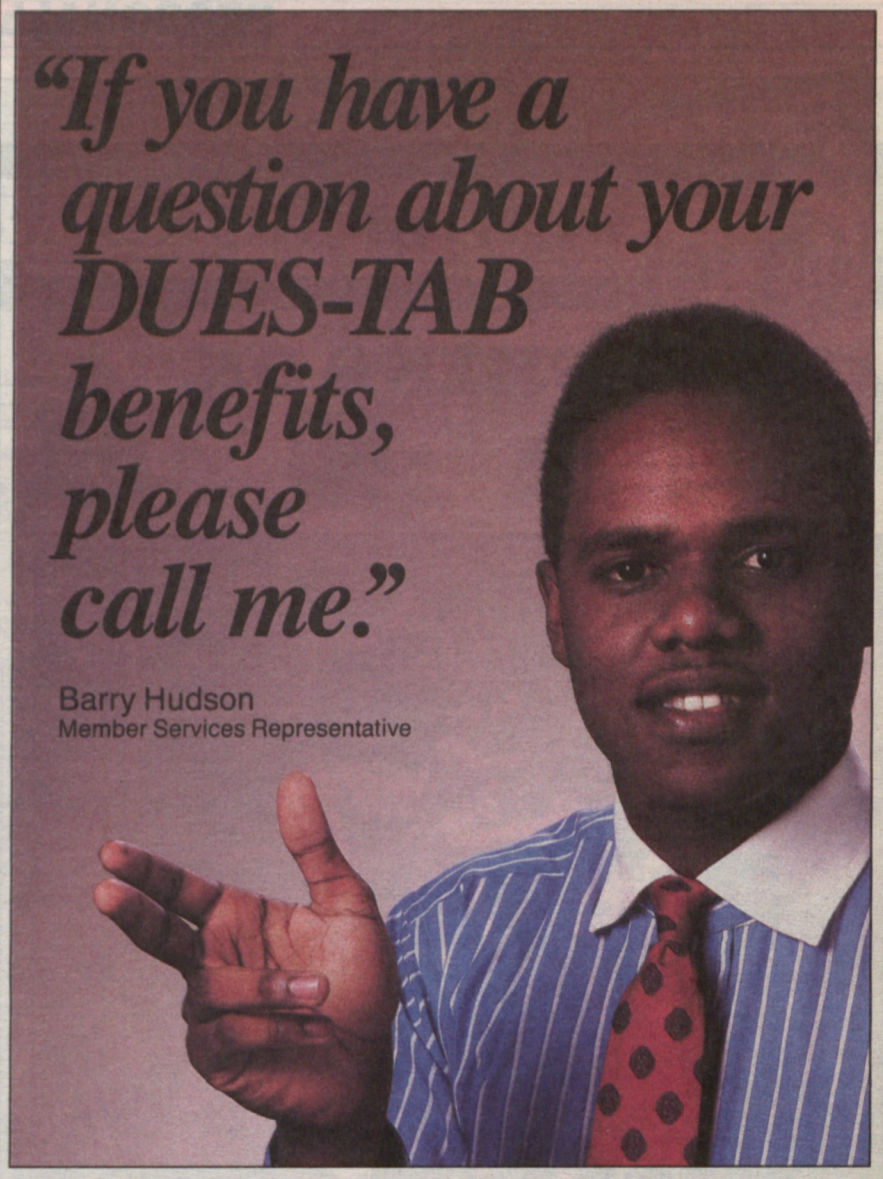
If the AIDS children have helped make some schools more inclusive, so have severely mentally retarded students. Carola Murray-Seegert writes about one such outcome in *Nasty Girls*, a study of regular students helping retarded students in an inner-city San Francisco high school. Murray-Seegert, an Association member, now teaches at the Frankfurt American High School in Germany.

The San Francisco program benefited both the disabled and the regular kids, Murray-Seegert reports. But it raised once again the question of distinctions among ethnic groups in the schools. Among the regular students only those with the lowest status and the lowest ambitions—the self-styled "nasty girls" of the title—elected the course that allowed them to tutor the disabled kids—whom they called "humans like us." The college prep students—in this school less likely to be Black than the peer tutors—didn't get involved. In Fass's terms, it was a case of outsiders looking after outsiders.

It's never enough merely to bring outsiders into the schools. You also have to monitor their experience for unequal effects, these authors say, and never let them be stereotyped—or stereotype themselves—into permanent outsider status.

—Nancy R. Needham

The NEA Professional Library Book Club announces a dual main selection for October. ***Changing Problem Behavior*** by **Alex Molnar** and **Barbara Lindquist** and ***Power Teaching*** by **Benjamin Mahle**. For information on Club membership, write NEA/PLBC at 230 Livingston St., Northvale, NJ 07647 (1-201-767-4093).



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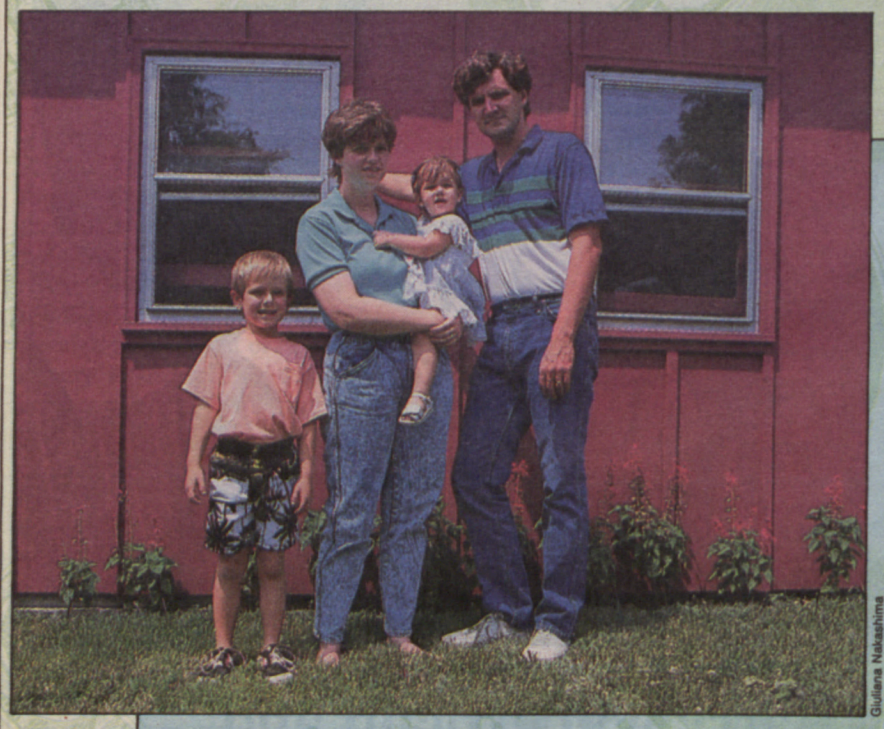

Giuliana Nakashima

This school year Missouri teachers Gregg and Nancy Montgomery are taking charge of their finances.

Last month the Montgomerys set goals and calculated their net worth. This month they plan to tackle a *cash-flow statement*—a record of what comes in and what goes out—and take a hard look at what they've really got to work with. Then they'll determine just what they have to fall back on in case of emergency.

The Montgomerys pulled out paycheck stubs, mortgage payment coupon books, and records of other loans. But they quickly discovered they needed to dig much deeper. Many expenditures are seasonal—like holiday and vacation bills. Some things, like insurance premiums, are paid twice a year. To get a true picture of how they were spending money, the Montgomerys needed to go through some old records. These are the things they considered:

► *The obvious:* income from regular jobs; payments for auto and other loans, property taxes, utilities, food, clothing, transportation, and insurance.

► *The not-so-obvious:* income from tutoring, speech writing, and odd jobs; money spent for gifts or vacations.

► *The obscure:* money paid to credit card companies. It doesn't help much to list "VISA: $500"—you really need to know what the $500 was spent on. So round up a couple months' worth of credit card receipts. And get out your checkbook register in order to track big occasional expenditures like dentist bills.

► *The invisible:* Many of us are shocked to see how much of our money is disappearing into a category we list in the checkbook as "cash" or "bank card." If withdrawals from ATM machines seem to be your largest category of expenditures, consider carrying a small notebook for two weeks. Note payments for gasoline, haircuts, dry cleaning, lawn mowing or housecleaning, in-between trips to the all-night convenience store, pizzas out—and don't leave out the money for the kids' lunches or the local hospital raffle.

When the Montgomerys recorded their income, they divided Gregg's total summer school earnings, which come in over a period of weeks, by 12 to prorate them on a monthly basis.

Monthly Income:

Gregg's take-home pay	$1,350
Nancy's take-home pay	1,350
Income from summer school	180
Total monthly income	$2,880

Gregg and Nancy split the expenditures into two categories: those that were pretty well set in stone (fixed monthly expenses) and those that offered some room to maneuver (discretionary monthly expenses). They prorated utilities, day care, and other expenditures that vary with the seasons.

Fixed Monthly Expenses

Mortgage payment (includes property tax and homeowner's insurance)	$625
Life insurance	137
Water	28
Electricity	58
Gas	40
Groceries	325
Clothing	42
Child Care	175
Transportation	
Auto Insurance	40
Car loan	231
Gasoline and maintenance	100
Telephone	15
Credit card payments	50
Miscellaneous	200
Total fixed monthly expenses	$2,066

There's not much fat here. The Montgomerys' expenditures for clothing, child care, groceries, and other essentials are all more than reasonable. What about discretionary expenses?

Discretionary Monthly Expenses

Charities	$ 50
Restaurant meals	200
Movies, video rentals, entertainment	25
Vacations	33
Books, magazines, newspapers	25
Gifts	75
Total discretionary expenses	$408

The Montgomerys don't really overspend here, either. They spend little, for example, on entertainment for the children, choosing instead to take them to museums and involve them in other activities that are free. Evan goes to a summer school program that gives him field trips and cultural enrichment programs without charge. Gregg and Nancy's largest discretionary expenditure, $200 for restaurant meals, includes both dinners out for the two of them and fast-food outings with the kids.

The Montgomerys have a total monthly income of $2,880 and total monthly expenses of $2,474. That $406 of unspent income gives them something to work with.

First, they need to consider maintaining liquid funds for emergencies. The traditional wisdom dictates that prudent planners keep roughly three months' income in a liquid account—checking, savings, or money market. For the Montgomerys, that would be about $8,600, nearly twice the $4,500 in their savings and checking accounts.

But the financial emergencies that frightened an earlier generation aren't so common anymore. The Montgomerys have medical insurance, so they needn't fear the high cost of an illness. Their disability income insurance will cover them if they become disabled. Both Montgomerys have secure jobs, and Gregg has tenure.

Gregg and Nancy feel they need to keep $3,000 in an emergency fund. They already have more than that. Today, there's another option as well. A line of credit can be used in lieu of ready money. Most banks that offer VISA and MasterCard provide an optional check-writing privilege.

Here's how that works: If you have a $1,500 credit limit on your card, you can use that credit line either by charging something with the card or by writing a check—and that's an important option. You can use your credit line to pay for essentials like the doctor bills or the mortgage payment if you get in a bind.

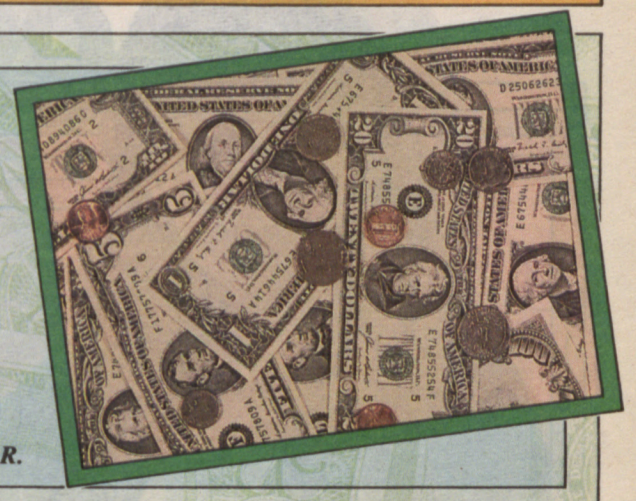
For couples like the Montgomerys, who use credit wisely and don't overspend, an account with a check-writing option makes sense, providing one more cushion for an emergency. Because interest charges on revolving credit cards are high, the checks should be used only in emergencies—and even then, the resulting debt should be paid off right away with a less expensive loan from a bank or credit union.

In financial planning, getting started is the hardest part, and the Montgomerys have that behind them.

—Mary Rowland

PERSONALLY SPEAKING

How Does Your Cash Flow?



Last month, you figured out your net worth. This month, it's time to track down where your money comes from and where it goes.

Income

► Salary and wages (find a recent paycheck stub).

► Income from your business (get out last year's tax return or several months' business receipts).

► Investment income (from dividends or interest), Social Security or pension payments, child support and alimony payments.

Expenditures

► Check and credit card payments, payroll deductions, (checkbook register, paycheck stubs, itemized credit card statements or receipts).

► Cash payments (groceries, gasoline, parking, dry cleaning...).

► Seasonal expenses (heating, cooling, child care) and annual payments (insurance—life, disability, automobile, homeowners; property taxes), divided by 12.

Filing the Facts

While you're digging through your records, you might decide your filing system needs an overhaul, too. Consider setting up just six files:

► *Personal and family records* that prove identity and job qualifications. These include birth and marriage certificates, diplomas and other scholastic records, club memberships, academic honors, union memberships, and military records. Other things that would fit here are divorce papers, adoption or custody papers, professional licenses, and wills.

► *Property documents* that prove ownership and cost of real estate, personal property, household furnishings, and vehicles.

► *Financial records* that show your investments, debts, and expenses. Investments include checking and money market accounts, brokerage accounts, Individual Retirement Accounts, and tax-deferred annuities. Debts include credit card balances and loans. Expense records include bank statements that show what bills you've paid by check and itemized credit card statements that show what you've charged and paid for.

► *Insurance policies* as well as premium receipts, claims papers, and settlement records.

► *Tax records.* Tax returns should be kept indefinitely, backup materials for three years.

► *Medical and health records* like written family medical history (including blood types), prescriptions, and doctors' names. —*M.R.*

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Additionally, the Montgomery GI Bill Plus the Army College Fund can offer as much as $25,200 toward continuing education, for qualified soldiers.

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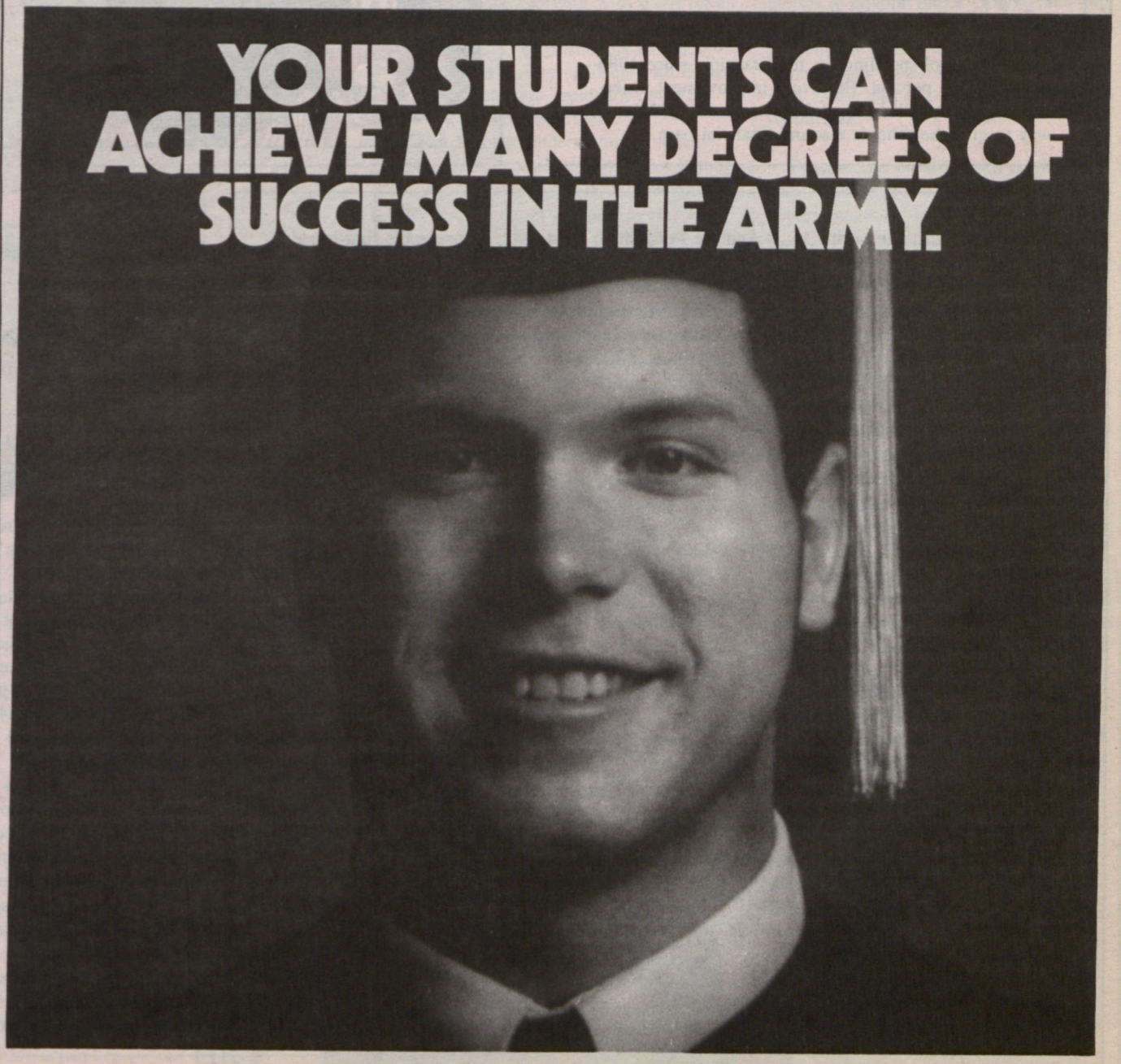


Looking Back

Royce Bair

Utah sixth-grade teacher Lilia Eskelsen ("Are You Treated Like a Professional? Or a Tall Child?" Dec. 1988) was featured in one of five Utah Education Association ads that ran in all the state's newspapers earlier this year. In each ad, a public school teacher explained how underfunding of education affects students. Five sixth grades in Eskelson's school share 35 social studies texts, which they pass around on a cart.

The ad campaign was part of a UEA lobbying drive for more school funding. Utah ranks last among the states in per pupil spending.

Did the ads work? Well, funding is at last moving in the right direction. This year Utah's legislature voted to increase school spending for the first time since 1986—but only by 3 percent. But every improvement in the Utah economy still brings talk of tax cuts—and that's no way to give the schools a sound financial base.

Vice President Dan Quayle is a man of his word. Last January, Quayle told Illinois teacher Larry Baran (pictured below) he'd visit Baran's special education students, who made silk floral arrangements for a Washington, D.C., inaugural reception. The kids attend Illinois' Homewood-Flossmoor High School and South Metropolitan Association, a cooperative for multiply handicapped students the public schools can't accommodate (People, April).

Sure enough, in April, Quayle and his wife, Marilyn, visited Baran's class—and the Vice President addressed all 2,100 Homewood-Flossmoor students in a special assembly. Quayle spoke of his upcoming trip to Asia and Australia, the importance of education, and the dangers of drugs.

Sheer determination on Baran's part brought about both the floral project and Quayle's visit. The special ed teacher first repeatedly called the White House to get his students' project accepted, then told Quayle about it at the reception.

"I'll never forget the sincerity of Vice President and Mrs. Quayle," says Baran. "They recognized that these special needs students were job-ready and job-worthy."

Testing specialists and critics meeting recently at DeKalb College in Clarkston, Ga., agreed that standardized tests ("Is Student Testing Out of Control?" November 1988) are being misused in schools throughout the country.

Many symposium participants said tests need to be interpreted better to the public. Some even suggested that results shouldn't be released to legislators, parents, reporters—or anyone else who doesn't have the expertise to interpret them correctly!

Meanwhile, in nearby Atlanta, School Superintendent J. Jerome Harris has proposed linking the final half-percent of employee pay raises to an increase in systemwide scores on standardized reading exams. That would be a mistake, says an expert from the firm that supplies Atlanta with standardized tests. The tests are designed to measure the performance of individual students, not of teachers.

And the Texas state senate has approved a TSTA-initiated bill to halt the standardized testing of first graders. Each October, the Lone Star State tests first, third, fifth, seventh, ninth, and eleventh graders in reading, writing, and math. The state board of education also recommended dropping the first-grade tests, questioning whether they came too early in youngsters' school careers.

In fact, many people nationwide consider first graders too young to be subjected to standardized testing. Such concerns have caused other states—including Arizona and North Carolina—to scale back or eliminate standardized testing in the early grades.

Alex McMahan

Although enrollment has dropped in the past 20 years, elementary schools constructed today ("Different by Design," May/June) are physically much larger than those built in the late 1960s, says the president of a Minneapolis architectural firm.

James Berchert

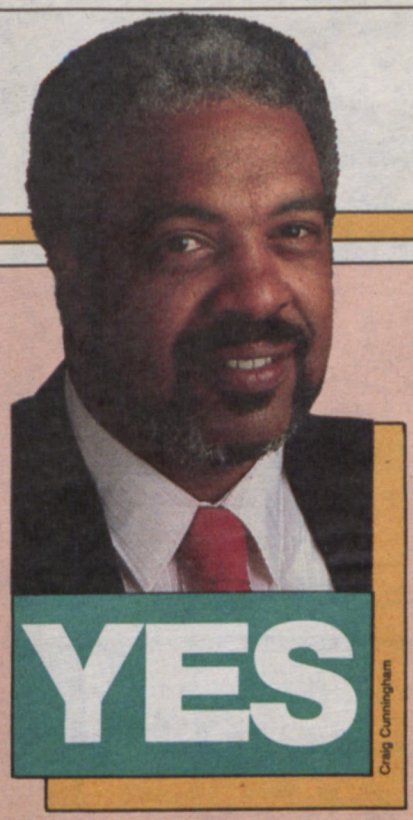
Writing in the May 1989 issue of *Building Education*, James E. Rydeen of Armstrong, Torseth, Skold, and Rydeen explains that a generation ago folks used a standard formula to determine the size of school buildings: allow 60 square feet per student.

If a school had 840 students, for example, designers would multiply 840 by 60 and come up with roughly 50,000 square feet. Today, a typical new K-6 school houses 740 students in 92,000 square feet, an allowance of 124 square feet per student.

Why the increased space? Much of it is needed to accommodate the broader array of programs and services today's schools offer, says Rydeen. Among these new offerings are programs for the gifted and talented and for adults, expanded classes and equipment in physical education, counseling programs and social services, all-day kindergarten, and summer enrichment classes. Also, the multipurpose room of 1969 has grown into special project rooms for subjects like science, art, and music.

Debate

Should Dropouts Be Denied Driver's Licenses?



Bill Russell teaches fifth grade at Malden Elementary School in Charleston, W.Va. He's a member of the West Virginia Education Association's legislative committee and a past president of the Kanawha Teachers Association. Russell also works with the Governor's Summer Youth Program.

Having a license to drive is a privilege, not a right. Before gaining that privilege, a young person should demonstrate the maturity to exercise it responsibly.

The student who drops out of high school pays a high price, often for a lifetime, and we should do everything we can to make potential dropouts think twice. By dropping out of high school, a youngster conveys the message that he or she gives up when life becomes difficult. That negative impression then affects other aspects of the young person's life.

Employers, for example, usually don't pay high school dropouts more than the minimum wage—hardly enough for self-support. Also, because dropouts don't get good jobs, they move around often and don't accumulate seniority. That means they're often the first to go in an employee layoff.

Last year, my state—West Virginia—enacted a law requiring anyone under 18 who hasn't graduated from high school to either attend high school or forfeit eligibility for a driver's license. The only exceptions are cases of extreme hardship (as defined by local school boards). In passing this law, the state provided a powerful incentive for dropouts to return to school and complete their educations.

The state isn't going to just abandon these young people. The legislature also mandated that the state department of education establish a remedial program to improve the odds for potential dropouts. The plan calls for teachers and counselors to identify "at-risk" students in the primary grades and provide them with counseling and instruction in specialized labs. The remedial sessions would most likely take place after school or in summer sessions.

Not surprisingly, the driver's license provision has already aroused some controversy. In fact, it's already been tested in the courts—and passed. In August, a circuit court upheld an earlier ruling that the state has a compelling interest in keeping students in school since those who drop out are statistically likely to end up receiving public assistance. The plaintiff in the case, a dropout, plans to appeal the case to the state supreme court.

The purpose of the West Virginia law isn't to take away rights, but rather to show kids that they'll never get ahead in life if they drop out of school.

Nationally, our dropout rate is close to 25 percent—and that creates problems affecting our economy, crime rate, and quality of life. Every dropout is a net loss to our economy and can become a permanent financial burden. Studies have shown that up to 60 percent of all dropouts become involved in some type of crime—and that they become locked into a life of crime and poverty at an early age.

In contrast, teenagers who graduate from high school become a net gain to our economy.

Since the West Virginia law has been in effect, the state's dropout rate has decreased by 30 percent. According to state policy, when a student misses more than 10 consecutive days or has 15 unexcused absences, he or she is considered a dropout. School suspension days count as absences—and it is absences due to suspension that have been reduced the most.

When a student leaves school, the action affects society just as much as it does the dropout. One way of increasing the odds in everyone's favor is to withhold drivers' licenses from dropouts. When kids know they can't have a license unless they stay in school, they'll work harder at their studies and achieve greater classroom—and life—success. West Virginia has found an effective dropout policy. It should serve as a model for other states.

Bruce Fessenden teaches eighth-grade science at Amherst (N.H.) Middle School, where he's also science curriculum coordinator. He's served as president of the Amherst Education Association and as an NEA-New Hampshire board member and IPD Committee member.

The idea that teens place such a premium on having a driver's license that they'll stay in school until graduation in order to keep it—thereby lowering our country's 25 percent dropout rate—is a simplistic response to a complex problem.

The strategy is popular among legislators, who are long on good intentions but short on research and practical experience. Legislators have no experience working with teens on a daily basis and no understanding of why students perform badly or leave school. Nor do they consult with those who do—teachers, guidance counselors, and administrators.

The reasons students fail or leave school have nothing to do with whether they're allowed to drive. Achievement problems begin at an early age and have many causes, not the least of which are lack of care and attention, abusive or alcoholic parents, and a sense that school isn't important. These problems escalate over the years, so that by the time affected students reach their teens, pregnancy, drugs, and even violence become the apparent reasons for their dropping out.

The way to motivate kids is to provide them with pleasant surroundings, reasonable class sizes, and sensitive, caring, talented—and well-paid—teachers and staff. But this approach is complex and expensive, so it's no wonder legislators latch on to the driver's license idea, which costs nothing but teachers' time.

My own New Hampshire state legislature considered a no-license proposal in 1988. The provision—part of a comprehensive literacy and dropout prevention bill—would have stopped dropouts from driving unless they achieved a certain score on a standardized test. The proposal was defeated—largely through the efforts of NEA New-Hampshire, whose members felt it didn't address the real causes of student dropout and therefore wouldn't lead to responsible solutions.

A similar proposal surfaced in the New Hampshire legislature this year. This one would have denied driver's licenses to anyone under 18 who was out of school and hadn't either graduated or gotten a GED. NEA-NH strongly opposed this measure for the same reasons as the earlier bill, and it was withdrawn.

Proponents of bills such as these should consider the ramifications of forcing teens to stay in school. Just because the kids are physically in the classroom doesn't mean they'll receive an education. Most likely, they'll become mental dropouts. They'll probably also become bitter. The last thing we need in our schools is an army of captive teens, capable of physically damaging the buildings and hindering other students from learning and teachers from teaching.

If legislators are serious about lowering our country's dropout rate, improving literacy, and increasing learning, they must forget the Band-Aid approach and learn how to identify and help potential dropouts at an early age—when doing so can make a real difference.

Educators know—and legislators need to realize—that to be motivated to learn and take on new challenges, a child must possess high self-esteem and have experienced success. This self-esteem must be developed at an early age. Its importance is shown by the results of programs like Head Start—designed to address needs like esteem building and skill development. Children who have attended such programs are better prepared than others from similar backgrounds to stay in school.

We should be striving to raise a healthy and motivated crop of young people instead of punishing those who fall through the cracks.

A National Trend?

West Virginia isn't the only state to deny driving privileges to teens who've dropped out of school. Florida, Texas, and Wisconsin also have enacted such laws, and similar legislation is pending in 13 other states. Recently U.S. Rep. George Sangmeister (D-Ill.) introduced a bill in the House of Representatives that would extend the practice nationwide. Under its provisions, any state that failed to develop such a program would face a 5 percent cutback in federal highway funds.

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